GOD AND THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

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B. H. Streeter

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God and the Struggle for Existence

D'Arcy, Charles Frederick

BY

THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN

LILY DOUGALL

AND

CANON B. H. STREETER

(EDITOR)

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FOREWORD

"God is dead," says Nietzsche's Zarathustra; and there are many who, in face of the evil of the world, are afraid he may be right, yet still "faintly trust the larger hope." This book is written to suggest to such that there are solid grounds in reason for the contrary conviction—God is alive, and from Him we may get power ourselves to really live.

Cutts End,
Cumnor, *August, 1919.*

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I

INTRODUCTORY

By B. HILLMAN STREETER, M.A.,
Hon. D.D. Edin.

Fellow of Queen's College, Oxford; Canon Residentiary of Hereford

The Existence of God.

"If the gods," said Socrates, "do not prefer the good man to the evil, then it is better to die than to live." Unless we are convinced that in the last resort the power behind the Universe is on the side of righteousness, the mainspring of endeavour is broken, the lamp of hope is almost quenched. But during the last hundred years or so there have been not a few to whom it has appeared that the discoveries of modern science have made the existence of God "an unnecessary hypothesis." There are many more to whom the experience of the war has made it an incredible one.

The problem of evil, the question whether life has any meaning, the doubt

of the existence of God, are felt with an unprecedented acuteness by the present generation—a generation of which it may be well said that "the iron has entered into its soul." And those who have drunk the cup of bitterness to the dregs are apt to feel a peculiar irritation at the easy optimism of any theology or philosophy which lightly tries "to justify the ways of God to man."

Providence and Progress.

To the last generation Providence and Progress were both magic words. To the religious, the Universe seemed luminous of divine purpose; to the intellectuals, the doctrine of Evolution through natural selection implied the automatic necessity of continuous advance. Religion and Science might be difficult to harmonise, and the ethics of Christ and those of the Struggle for Existence might not seem quite compatible—still, whichever way one chose to take it, in the last resort this was a most excellent world. In an age of unparalleled material comfort, the comfortably-minded of either school could draw comfortable conclusions. The religious could say, "God's in his Heaven, all's right with the world"—and if some things did appear not altogether right,

still they were God's will, and He must know best. The non-religious were even better off. The doctrine of progress through the survival of the fittest gave a biological justification for doing one's own sweet will. The religious might feel the difficulty of reconciling the claims of God and Mammon, but these others could claim the authority of science for the view that individual selfishness is the high-road to corporate salvation. In Economics it was laid down as a law of Nature that unlimited competition between individuals, each seeking solely his own profit, inevitably redounded to the benefit of all. In international politics the conclusion could be drawn that war was a "biological necessity" and that the nation which could crush all others was the greatest benefactor of humanity, since the hope of civilisation lay in the domination of the world by the strongest power.

The Change in Outlook.

To-day the dogma that unlimited competition inevitably leads to the greatest happiness of the greatest number has fewer adherents: the doctrine that war is a necessity for progress has fewer still. . . .

Facts have refuted them.

But if facts have refuted the doctrine that Progress is a mechanical necessity and internecine struggle the path towards it, have they not equally refuted the belief in a Providence that orders all things for the best? On all sides we hear the cry, What kind of a God is it who, having the power to overrule the destinies of man, could look on unmoved at the events of the last five years? Surely if ever in history there was a time clamant for some special intervention, it has been that which we have lived through.

The Hope of the Future.

Modern civilisation, nominally Christian, has in practice lived by the ethics of the struggle for existence; and by the logic of that same ethic it seems like to perish—through war or the class-war. This is the conclusion which thinking men and women everywhere are drawing. The only hope for the future would seem to be a new social and international morality—a morality based not on competition but on co-operation. But if the goodness, the power, or the existence of God be in doubt, neither the intellectual justification nor the emotional dynamic of such an ethic are particularly obvious. And, if the last century read the lesson of Biology aright,

is not that ethic necessarily a frail and artificial thing, since it is built on principles which the fundamental nature of reality denies?

Purpose of this Volume.

With these and like problems in their minds the authors of this volume have endeavoured to re-examine the facts. Cross-questioning the Universe in the light of modern science and human history, they ask what conclusions a clear-eyed and impartial investigation will warrant—both as regard the nature and character of the Power behind phenomena, and the fate, the value, and the hope of the individual in the scheme of things.

Analysis of Contents.

In the following Chapter some preliminary questions are raised: Do the facts justify the inference that there is a God at all, that there is any kind of intelligent direction behind the world process? If so, is this Intelligence beneficent—either in the sense of broadly "making for righteousness" or of caring for the fate of the individual man? Or do the facts suggest rather a limited God, beneficent, indeed, but "cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in" by some fate or force or nature of things of which He, like us, is to some extent the victim? Or, again, is there reasonable

ground for the belief that in Him Love and Supreme Power can coexist? In Chapter III. the *primâ facie* view is accepted, that Nature's apparent aim is the producing of beings perfectly corresponding with their whole environment, but that man, though so far Nature's masterpiece, at present very imperfectly so corresponds. It is then asked, what does the study of the evolutionary process as a whole show to be needed to perfect that correspondence; and, if that process has a meaning at all, what inference, if any, must we draw as to the ethical quality and character of the Power of which ultimately it is the expression. Chapter IV. is an enquiry into the nature of Power. It suggests that in the past power of a low degree of effectiveness has often been mistaken for supreme power, and it questions how far this error may have vitiated traditional theology and ethics. The final Chapter endeavours to face the question of the suffering and failure of the individual. Can we say to the man or woman weighed down by sorrow, disappointment or remorse that there is a "way out"? Is the ultimate nature of things such as to justify anything like that belief in "Provi-

dence" and "Salvation" which was the very centre of the old religion?

Method and Standpoint.

The thought and labours of not a few of the keenest intellects of our age have been concentrated on the problems we attack—and that thought and labour has not been spent in vain. Some of the questions are as old as philosophy itself, others are of comparatively modern origin; but even on the oldest, new light has been thrown in recent years. The authors of this volume have tried to unify and bring into a small compass various strands in a widespread movement in the thought of the day; and in working at this task they believe that on some points they have found something new to offer and have some things to say which either have not been said before, or have been said, but not with the same balance of emphasis or in the same connection. But if this is so, it is because they have made it throughout their first endeavour to interrogate facts, not to look for answers which would square with traditional theology. Some of the answers suggested are to all intents and purposes those given by traditional Christianity, only stated in modern language and related to modern thought. Others, it should

frankly be admitted, are different. But it is remarkable that in every case where the facts have seemed to point to a conclusion which differs from that given by the old Theology, that conclusion appears to be in effect a return to the religion and philosophy of Christ.

Reculer pour mieux sauter. Christianity moves forward whenever it goes back to Christ.

II

LOVE AND OMNIPOTENCE

By the Most Rev. CHARLES F. D'ARCY, D.D.
Archbishop of Dublin

The Problem Stated.

The doubts characteristic of the present time set these two Divine attributes, Love and Omnipotence, in the sharpest antagonism. If God be good, it is said every day, He cannot be omnipotent, the world being what it is. If He be omnipotent, He cannot be good, for the same reason. He would surely exert His almighty power and put things right. It is an old puzzle; the difference in its position is that more people are thinking about it now. People who before the war were never troubled with the malady of thought have caught the fever of enquiry, and stand aghast at the discovery of this ancient problem.

Two Ways of Seeking God.

Why do we believe in God? Apart from traditional belief, and putting aside the more academic discussions of the

schools, there are two contrasting ways in which men have been able to attain to faith in a Supreme Being worthy of being called by the great name, God. The first looks out upon the vast world of creation, and finds there convincing proof of the work of mind. The second looks into the inner experience of the soul, and recognises God by spiritual apprehension. In modern times, opinion has swung very remarkably from the former to the latter. In the eighteenth century, in spite of shrewd criticism, the conviction prevailed that the argument from creation to the Creator was inevitable. "The heavens declare the glory of God; the firmament showeth His handywork," sang the Psalmist; and never were the words so appreciated as when the discoveries of astronomy were the most notable achievements of science. The universe was revealed as a huge mechanism, a vast clockwork, moving with perfect regularity. The inference from the watch to the watchmaker was so striking and simple that the apologist enjoyed a popular triumph. Its fruits lasted far into the nineteenth century.

The Darwinian revolution changed all

that. And with the growth of philosophical and psychological study came gradually to light a new world—the world of inner experience. During the last half-century, and especially the last generation, men have been learning to find God within, rather than without.

A New Theistic Creed.

The coming of this change can be traced in Tennyson and Browning. We find it fully developed in the profound study of the mystics which has marked the last twenty years. Now we have reached a position in which this inner experience, regarded as a revelation of God, has become the inspiration of a fresh and popular creed. It gives us, we are told, a new and vivid faith in God as the representative of our race, the captain of our souls, leading us in the conflict with evil, sharing our pains, sympathising with our strivings, using our powers of mind and body in the struggle against material forces, and helping us to overcome the difficulties which beset us.[1] This God is a finite being. He is indeed born of man's spiritual experience. He is a synthesis of the best that is in us all. From man He sprang, and with man He will perish. For

[1] H. G. Wells, *God the Invisible King.*

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Him, as for us, the great encircling universe is an alien, intractable and terribly mysterious power. From this mysterious power we had our origin. There dawned, in the course of natural evolution, by some inexplicable process, that fitful light which we call the mind or soul of man: strong enough to adapt some portion of its material environment to its needs, it was yet not able to gain any true knowledge of its position or secure footing for its existence. But from our united thoughts and efforts arose a higher soul, uniting and representing us all, sharing our pains and helping us; but confronted, as we are, by the same insoluble problems.

This strange but very interesting doctrine shows what must happen if we give up the revelation of God in Nature. And it is well worthy of note how directly it leads to polytheistic ways of thought. Why should this soul of our souls be One Deity for the whole human race? Why should not every nation, every distinct community, have its own deity? On this theory, the "Old German God" may actually exist. The genius of ancient Athens may actually have lived as the divine Athena. If the League of Nations se-

cures peace on earth it may also create harmony on Olympus. We are back among the Homeric gods; and can breathe once more the freshness of an early world. It is specially curious, however, to observe what happens when we let go our belief in Nature as a revelation of God. We find ourselves on a descending slope, sliding down into paganism. This is especially true in our day. The unity of Nature implies the unity of God. When Nature was regarded as the scene in which a multitude of diverse and often opposing spiritual powers operated and competed with one another, polytheistic modes of thought were inevitably suggested. But modern science has been teaching more and more clearly the unity of Nature. Though that unity is not yet fully demonstrated, every advance is a step towards its demonstration. The instructed mind of the modern man cannot look out upon the world and believe that he is witnessing a conflict of capricious finite deities. He knows that the varied scene is the outcome of one vast evolutionary process, and therefore, if he holds it necessary to believe at all in a spiritual life in or behind or around the whole, he must believe in

that life as possessing a world-embracing unity. But if Nature has no message about God, if He be but a synthesis of psychical elements, a group-soul, arising out of human society, and perishing when the group is dissipated, there is no reason why we should believe in His unity. It is much more reasonable to believe in a Pantheon.

Does Nature Reveal God?

It is surely somewhat surprising that we so seldom endeavour, in these days, to gather, by a simple observation of Nature, and in as undogmatic a manner as possible, some ideas concerning the character of the Supreme Power, if such there be. Perhaps we are influenced still by the impressive argument of Herbert Spencer's *First Principles,* in which, after an elaborate demonstration of the contradictions which may be found in the terms used to describe the being and attributes of God, he concluded that the "Power which the Universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable." This he affirms to be the "deepest, widest, and most certain of all facts." Admitting that behind the manifold phenomena of Nature there must be some Supreme Power, he yet holds as a positive creed, and as the most indubitable

of all assertions, the doctrine that this Power is unknowable. Spencer's Agnostic creed, thus presented as the result of an irresistible philosophical criticism of the effort to ascend from Nature to God, has had an enormous influence. It puts in a formal shape the conclusion which so many minds have gathered hastily from the difficulties and perplexities which beset them as they try to adjust their traditional creed to the new ideas of science and to the painful problems of life. The question with which we are now dealing is an instance. The omnipotence of God is not only difficult to reconcile with His goodness, in view of the facts of human experience, it is itself a conception which involves contradiction. The fact must be admitted. Every effort to think out the idea of omnipotence will be found to end in contradiction. We need not pursue the investigation: it would lead into mazes of dialectical discussion, which would but obscure the issue and afford no satisfaction. But Herbert Spencer fails to note that the very statement in which he presents his creed is itself contradictory. The "Power which the Universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable." We may well ask, If

the Power is manifested, how is it inscrutable? It is surely clear that so far as the Power is manifested, it is not inscrutable.

Difficulty not Peculiar to Theology.

The truth is that an acute criticism can always find contradictions in the terms which express the underlying principles of all branches of knowledge. This fact has been amply proved in recent years. There is no department of science, whether physical or moral, which cannot be thus undermined. Theology is not in any worse case, in this respect, than other branches of enquiry. But all sciences have to be continually adjusting their conceptions to advancing experience and the more searching criticism which it brings. Nor does any science let go its old principles, principles which it has found to work well in the past, until it can successfully adjust itself to the altered conditions in which it finds itself.

We are not, then, to cease to seek God in Nature, because science has given us new views of Nature, or because some of our old conceptions prove difficult. Theology, like science, must ever be prepared to take up its burden anew, undeterred by the greatness or difficulty of the task which lies before it.

Character of Supreme Power.

Suppose then, assuming, like Herbert Spencer, that there is some great power which works in the universe, and keeping in mind the modern view of creation, we ask the question, Is it possible to gather from experience and observation any clear ideas as to the character of that Power? As we know a man from his deeds, we ought surely to be able to attain to some estimate of the character of the Supreme Power by considering the universe, which is the expression of its activity.

Natural Beauty.

Approaching this question with a resolute determination to escape the influence of customary opinion, and above all keeping clear of traditional dogma, and surveying creation as a whole and without emphasis on those aspects of it which are specially attractive to our desires and needs, it would appear that the Supreme Power is much more concerned with the production of beauty, especially beauty of form and colour, than with goodness. Nature produces the beautiful with a lavishness which finds no parallel in the works of man; and the beauty of Nature is not, as in human art, a form added to a material, which is diverted from its proper

use to serve the artistic purpose. The beauty of Nature is intrinsic, universal, penetrating. It springs into being through the inevitable working of natural forces. It is as perfect in the little as in the great, in the snowflake and the structure of the minutest organism as in the Alpine peak or the sunset sky. It is found in the most irregular heaping together of fragments, a mountain slope or a torrent, as in the perfect symmetry of the blue dome of the sky. If it be urged that the beauty of Nature is not in the things themselves but in the cultivated mind which has learned to appreciate it, there is the ready answer that here is the very point of the argument. The fact that high cultivation of the æsthetic faculties enables us to see ever more and more beauty in Nature, is the very reason why we feel bound to discern in the Power behind Nature a Being to whom the beautiful is an end. So far as this part of our spiritual being is concerned, we discern that we are akin to the Supreme Power. We conclude that the beauty of Nature points to a certain character in the Supreme. He, shall we say, produces beauty because He delights in it, and

seemingly prizes it far more than He prizes goodness.[1]

This inference appears much more inevitable when we consider that most of this beauty is, from the material point of view, a waste product. It is useless. It does not help individuals to live or races to survive. Yet this unnecessary beauty is poured out with infinite prodigality on a careless, unseeing creation. In Nature it is hard to find anything which is truly ugly. For the ugly, one has to turn to the works of man.

Goodness in Nature.

On the other hand, goodness, in the moral sense of the term, makes its appearance only after immense ages. It appears fitfully, is maintained with difficulty, and is nearly always very imperfect. Yet goodness is useful as beauty is not. It is the cement of societies, enabling men to unite, and so become far more effective in their struggle with material forces. If human society were uniformly good in a very high degree, there is no doubt that eugenic principles would prevail, disease would be very largely eliminated, indus-

[1] On the argument from the beauty of Nature and for a convincing criticism of Kant's objection, see J. H. Kennedy, *Natural Theology and Modern Thought.*

trial conditions would be wholly transformed, war would be impossible—the world would be a very happy place, as we commonly count happiness. Morality is therefore a very useful thing, and the wonder is that an evolutionary process, which is supposed to depend upon the production of the useful, has not brought forth more goodness.

Now, regarding this problem from the point of view of those who believe that the universe is the life-work of a great Supreme Spirit, we can see a reason for this difference. God makes the world beautiful because He loves the beautiful, and can produce it without the intervention of finite wills. He has not made the world good, because goodness can only come about through the co-operation of finite wills with one another and with Him. First, the finite wills have to be produced, and there can be no goodness in creation until they arise. Secondly, when they are produced, they have to come into harmony with one another and with Him. And this harmony is impossible without a *willing denial of selfish inclinations on the part of the individual.* When this fact is grasped, the enormous difficulty of the production

of a good world is evident. It takes man —every man—as well as God, to produce it.

Problem of Pain.

Regarding the problem from the side of experience, we learn that only by education and discipline can men be brought to overcome their selfish inclinations for the good of the whole. And this education and discipline involve *pain*. Here, surely, is the place of pain in the moral history of mankind.

But this does not take in the whole problem of pain. The animal creation, in all its myriad races, is subject to pain. Yet even here we can see that pain has its place, and a very important place, in evolution. The pain of hunger drives the living creature to seek its food. The pain of torn flesh and the fear of such pain impel the hunted creature to seek safety. Through the ministry of pain have come about some of the most perfect and most beautiful of living forms. The pursuing wolf-pack gave to the horse his swiftness and his strength. The leopard's claw gave to the antelope its surpassing grace and agility.

If this use of pain to secure progress, and its service in providing moral disci-

pline for man, were all, the problem of pain would not be the terribly oppressive thing that it is. What wrings our hearts and stirs us to doubt the Divine goodness is the seeming superfluity of pain—the torture that, apparently, does no good, the sorrow that brings no blessing we can discern. It is our inability to see any efficacy for good in so much of the appalling suffering occasioned by the late war that has aroused questioning in so many minds. What good flows to themselves or to the world from the martyrdom of the Armenians, or the deportation of the women and children of Belgium and Northern France?

Pain and Progress.

Yet, when we view human history in a large way, we must see that the way of suffering is the way of progress. With pain man is brought into the world: by painful effort on the part of others his early life is nourished and protected: only with painful toil and self-denial can he do his duty as a man: by painful struggle, and generally severe suffering on the part of many, is every onward step in human development achieved. Science, art, social improvement, spiritual attainment—every great and noble thing in human life—come

about as the results of processes which involve much suffering. Yes, and arise out of conditions which are painful. For it is the pain of *need,* material or spiritual, which drives man ever onward on the path of attainment.

This is the truth which lends plausibility to the pessimism of the East. But that pessimism goes too far in its argument, that since all effort springs out of the pain of desire, and since the satisfaction of desire is momentary, all life is essentially painful. It omits to consider that the exercise of the completed faculty—that is, healthy living in its normal functioning—is essentially pleasurable; and that, therefore, however painful the process may be, the result is happiness. That is, pain exists in order to produce happiness. It is happiness in the making. That is the true lesson of the psychology of the will.

Pain in the New Testament.

When we have reached this point we can understand the teaching of the New Testament. It is a very remarkable fact that, while psalmist, poet, and prophet in the Old Testament are continually troubled by the problem of suffering, ever returning to it, and never completely satisfied, the New Testament shows, for the

most part, a complete unconsciousness that such a problem exists. St Paul, in one brief passage (Rom. viii. 18-26), recognises it. "The whole creation," he writes, "groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." But he had already, in a few brief sentences, solved the problem on the lines of his thought. "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed. . . . For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." That is, the suffering of creation is a temporary thing, part of the preparation for a coming perfection when sorrow shall be lost in joy.

The New Testament as a whole, and the teaching and example of our Lord, go even beyond this. For them suffering is not a difficulty to be explained: it is a source of light, a manifestation of Divine love. The reason of this change of attitude is simple and obvious: it is the fact of

the Cross of Christ. The suffering Son of God reveals the greatness of the love of God. God's sharing of man's pain brought home the supreme truth with saving power to the soul.

Out of this arose the great Christian idea of man as a sharer in the Divine suffering. St Paul delights in the thought that he can know, not only the power of Christ's resurrection, but also "the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death." And, for some centuries, suffering was regarded as the surest mark of holiness, so that a confessor or a martyr attracted the deepest reverence.

Pain and Redemption.

Suppose, for the moment, that we enlarge this conception and think of the agony of the world as we have witnessed it, as a great work of redemption, or at least uplifting, bringing about a higher life for future generations of men and results greater than we can now realise in the heavenly sphere: surely we must believe that the end is worth the sacrifice. The main difficulty is that, in so many cases, so far as we can see, the individual suffers horribly without any manifest good result to himself or to others; and is

very often a helpless woman or innocent child, a mere victim of lust or cruelty. All that can be said in answer to this is, it would seem, that only a complete knowledge of the universe to all eternity could enable us to measure the result of every such sacrifice. More fully, surely, than the "flower in the crannied wall" is every conscious individual related to the whole universal scheme of things. Our belief in the future life, also, enlarges without measure the field of possibilities and the difficulty of pronouncing judgment on the worth of any particular instance of suffering.

Returning to our main line of argument, we find then that there is ample evidence to bear out the contention that, the nature of man being what it is—consciousness, desire, and will being what they are—pain is the necessary discipline by means of which goodness must be brought about. The God who could make a universe beautiful throughout by the normal working of natural forces, could not produce a *good* universe but by the instrumentality of suffering. And this does not mean that He prizes goodness less than He prizes beauty. Rather, it means that

He prizes it more. He is willing to make infinitely greater sacrifices in order to obtain it. The fact of pain, then, enhances our conception of the value which God sets upon goodness.

It enhances all values. For, when thus interpreted, it means that God so delights in perfecting His creation, with all its beauty, by making it as complete morally as it is æsthetically, that He thinks any sacrifice, no matter how tremendous, whether on His own part or on the part of His conscious, wilful children, to be well worth while.

Fellowship with God.

If we have reason to believe that God shares in every human grief, that no lonely sufferer endures his agony apart from the sympathy and fellowship of God, that every sacrifice made is a sacrifice on God's part as well as on man's, and that, in suffering, God is calling on us to join Him in his age-long struggle against evil, we have a view of the world and of human life which gives to all genuine moral effort, whether pleasurable or painful, an intrinsic worth which cannot be estimated. It will appear, as we proceed, that there is reason to believe in this co-operation of God with us in the struggle of life, but

there is a simple consideration which provides a basis for confidence, and which we must first make clear.

Trustworthiness of the Universe.

All our experiences of the world, whether gained through our ordinary practical activities, or through advancing scientific research, conspire to prove that the Supreme Power which works in the universe is *trustworthy*.

We carry on all our work and make all our plans for the future on the supposition that there is a fundamental order in things. We know that we can depend on that order, and that we shall not be put to confusion. We are quite certain that the whole of things is a cosmos and not a chaos: we deal with the world on the understanding that what is true to-day will be true to-morrow, that things do not appear and disappear, combine or disintegrate, in an utterly aimless, unmeaning fashion; and we find that, though we are often puzzled, and often reach the limits of our knowledge and power, on the whole we are not disappointed.

Revealed in History of Religion.

It is also to be observed that there has been a steadily progressive advance in the banishing of the expectation of the capricious from our thoughts about the

world around us. Among primitive peoples the world is imagined as full of spiritual powers, whose influence may be detected in every unaccountable event, and whose actions fill human life with uncertainty. As civilisation increases, this animistic belief gives place to Polytheism—a change which greatly adds to the sense of security and of elevation, but which still finds a large space for the capricious and discordant. When Monotheism supervenes, life attains a unification, and therefore a trustworthiness, before impossible.

Revealed in Science.

The truth which we thus gather from our ordinary experience and from the history of religions has found a magnificent justification in the great career of modern science. The work of science has been, especially, a progressive reduction to order of the seeming confusion of the physical world. The discovery of the laws of Nature, as they have been called, is really the discovery of a fundamental trustworthiness in the Universe. It is shown that there is an underlying order in the succession of natural events, when that succession is understood, on which we can absolutely depend. The essential point is, that man can understand—that is, that he can

find in his own mind a measure which he can adjust to the ways in which the things in the natural world act and react upon one another. Science is indeed man finding himself at home in the Universe, and finding that, within certain limits, he is safe. Thus science may be regarded as a vast demonstration that the Supreme Power which works in the Universe is not only trustworthy, but is not so alien in character from man as to be utterly inscrutable. If man can by research and experiment make himself so much at home in the Universe, he must surely, to some degree, be able to adjust his thoughts to the Power which works in the Universe. Complete Agnosticism is therefore not justified by the teaching of science.

Human Control of Natural Forces.

It is because of this trustworthiness in things that man has been able, in so marvellous a manner, especially in recent times, to subordinate the material world to his own purposes. When he has discovered the ways in which natural forces operate, he can count upon those forces to produce their proper effect, and can use them to modify one another, quite certain that they will not fail him. All the wonderful processes of engineering and of

the various applications of the physical sciences, depend on this principle. They show the power which man gains when he finds that things are not incoherent and capricious, but coherent and therefore trustworthy. It is the very fact of unvarying sequence in natural events which gives to human mind and will their power over natural forces. Man is free and mighty in the world, because the Supreme Power which works in the world is trustworthy. This is indeed the very charter of human liberty.

Communion with Nature.

It is also true that our modern delight in Nature, and the rest and peace which come to the soul through communion with Nature, are closely related to our sense of an underlying trustworthiness in the Universe. Why do we turn from the worries and sorrows of human life, and from its puzzles and problems, to the beauty and greatness of Nature, and find there a source of consolation and strength? It is, surely, because we have found there a revelation of some power or principle on which we feel we can rely. It is because, in some way or other, we discern in Nature an immanent life which is not alien from ourselves, and on whose strength we

can lay hold. Apart from such a conviction, there is no source of peace to be found in Nature. "Red in tooth and claw," Nature presents the problem of continual pain in the most obtrusive manner. To the primitive animistic mind it is also filled with lurking terrors, even more awful than the tiger or the snake. Wordsworth is right when he traces the joy in Nature to the apprehension of the "presence which disturbs us with the joy of elevated thought, a sense sublime of something far more deeply interfused." The reflective mind traces out the source of its joy and finds God.

Summary. In the light of these thoughts, let us now turn back on our brief examination of the evidence which Nature and experience afford as to the character of the Supreme Power of the Universe.

We must think of that Power as one which expresses itself in producing the infinite variety of creation, and also in giving to the forms of creation an extraordinary abundance—a superabundance—of beauty. In addition, it seems quite clear that the Power which the Universe manifests to us is essentially trustworthy—there is a fundamental certainty on

which both thought and life can rest with confidence. These indications of character seem to point to a certain degree of kinship between the soul of man and the Supreme Power, for man enjoys the exercise of creative power in all the arts which he has learned to practise, and he can endow the products of art with some degree of beauty, and by this experience attain to such an appreciation of the beautiful that at last he awakens to the overwhelming beauty of the world about him. Man has also in his experience gained the idea of goodness, and though his own attainment of goodness is very imperfect, he has been able to rise to the belief that goodness is a quality of the Supreme Power. But he finds himself perplexed and dismayed by the monstrous evils which exist in the world, and the doubt intrudes—Can the Power which gives being to the world be indeed good? Or, if He be good, is He in the position of an engineer who has lost control of some great machine which he has made? We have seen that here there enters another consideration. The Supreme Power cannot make the world good without the co-operation of the intelligent human beings whom He has endowed with

moral spontaneity. Only by a harmony of all wills can a good Universe be produced.

Statement of Problem.

May it not be possible that this element introduces a final uncertainty into things, and leaves the end open to doubt? Perhaps, too, the trustworthiness of the Supreme ceases with the physical order. We can depend upon the laws of Nature: we cannot depend on human will. Why should we hold that the limit which thus applies to ourselves does not also apply to God? Experience seems to show that here God is just as much limited as we are. We have seen the evil wills of ambitious men plunge the world into a whirlpool of crime and misery. Would not God have prevented this if He could? And if He could not prevent it in our time, why should we think that He will be able to prevent similar, or even worse, evils in the future? We have also considered the Christian belief that, through suffering, God is working out a great redemption. But, even if we grant this, what security have we that the effort will be successful finally and on the scale of the Universe? It is quite possible that suffering may be the means through which certain limited goods, such

as we have considered, may be attained; and yet it may be vain to look for any final and complete victory over evil in this way. Our common experience seems to point to such a conclusion. We see many cases in which, after a brave struggle, by which much good is accomplished, the life seems to sink down to death in unhappiness or utter misery. Such a life seems a broken thing. We think there must be another half. But, even granting another half, what reason have we to believe that things will be better in a future life than in this?

What we need to save us from the despair to which such questions lead is a principle which will carry the Divine trustworthiness beyond our limited experience, and give us reason to believe that, no matter what happens, the evil must be overcome in the end, the good must ultimately triumph.

Fundamental Difficulty.

We have seen that, however we approach the problem, we are confronted by the same great difficulty—the disorder introduced into the world by the diverse and discordant wills of men. There cannot be goodness at all in the world but by the operation of will. Goodness is essentially

a quality of will. Therefore, in order to produce a good world, if that indeed was the purpose of the Supreme Power, it was necessary that He should call into existence a multitude of beings endowed with moral faculty—able, that is, to choose between good and evil. This made possible a good world, but it also made possible the existence of evil; and, so far as we can see, there is nothing impossible in the supposition that it also opened the way for the ultimate triumph of evil. We can imagine the terrible force of will let loose in the world, growing in its self-assertion of hostile principles, setting man against man, community against community, nation against nation. We can pursue in thought the consequences of such a condition of things and see how directly it would lead to the overthrow of all civilisation and the end of all that makes human life worth living. We can feel indeed that we have been very near to such a catastrophe in recent years, and that in the unsettlement of all the accustomed arrangements of ordered existence which marks the present time there lurk possibilities of social chaos that might easily undo all that has been accomplished

by the painful struggles of thousands of years. The condition of Russia to-day stands as an awful example of such a chaos.

Centre of Problem.

The centre of the problem with which we have to deal is now presented to us. If evil is to be overcome and the world saved from the unimaginable horror we have just indicated, there must supervene some power which can prevail over the antagonisms of contending wills and so produce harmony. There are many principles which can do this in a partial way. Reason can persuade the intellect and induce those who are in opposition to come to some better understanding. The appeal to interest will often make men sink other differences and unite in practical co-operation. The bonds arising from that mutual interdependence in the common social order which is created by the fundamental conditions of our life are very strong. Family ties, friendships, associations in work and in pleasure, keep men from pushing oppositions to an extremity. All these influences work for good against the disruptive power of self-asserting will. But there is a principle which is deeply engaged in all these, and which is yet

purer and more powerful than them all when once it is put forth.

Power of Love.

Love can overcome the opposition of wills, and, in doing so, bring about a higher harmony than any which can result from agreement on the basis of reasonable understanding, common interest, or association. All these persuade, Love conquers. It is like Force in this. But while force conquers and destroys, Love conquers and fulfils.

It is very important to observe that it is only in a world in which there are wills possessed of the power of choice, and in which there is therefore the possibility of evil, that Love can find full scope. For Love must be freely given or it is not Love; and, further, it is in overcoming the oppositions which it encounters, and by sacrifice winning its way to victory, that Love enters into full possession of its kingdom. Love finds its true sphere in a world in which are sin and sorrow, loss as well as gain. The possibility of evil is a necessary condition, as we have seen, of all real goodness. It is, we now see, necessary especially for the full exercise of that great spiritual faculty which we call Love.

What is Love? The question is not easy to answer. Many partial answers might be given. Love may be described as an emotion, but it is something more. It is more even than the will to bless. We shall come nearer to its true nature if we define it as the giving of self. Love is self finding itself in another. It is self resting in the other as its end. Love makes complete sacrifice for the other. Thus it annihilates the opposition between self and self. It attains a unity which intellect can never attain, for, though reason may demand such a unity, intellect has never been able to think it out. Love, therefore, is a bond of union among souls in a manner which somehow passes beyond the grasp of thought.

What is Love?

Christianity has ventured to affirm that Love is the essential nature of God, and therefore the ultimate truth of the Universe. "God is love, and he that abideth in love abideth in God and God abideth in him." If this be true, we have reason to believe that, no matter how gigantic the evils of the world may become, there is a power which will finally overcome them all. For here is a principle which exactly meets the great need of the world. The

God is Love.

world is not as good as it is beautiful, because goodness requires the willing co-operation of human wills, as well as the will of God, to produce it; and so far human wills have not united wholly with the will of God. But if we believe that God is Love, and that He has all eternity at His disposal, we cannot despair. We must believe that He will finally prevail over all oppositions and bring about a universal harmony, so making His universe as good as it is beautiful. If, further, we learn the lesson of the life and death of Christ, and believe that the Love of God shrinks from no sacrifice in order to prevail over evil, we must feel that the resources of the Divine Love are bound to secure at last overwhelming victory.

Conception of God.

In taking refuge in this solution of the difficulty, we have boldly assumed the truth of the fundamental faith of Christianity. Can we, in any way, link this faith with the thoughts about the Universe and the Supreme Power manifested in it, which we ventured to derive from observation of Nature and of life, and from the discoveries of science? We have now come to the most difficult point of all.

How is the Supreme Power related to the Universe?

Transcendence.

At one time it was held, almost universally, that God may be compared to a great engineer. The world is a vast machine, the work of His design and will. According to this view, the Creator stands outside and apart from His work. The doctrine is therefore described as a doctrine of Transcendence. Crudely presented, it involves endless difficulties. It seems to make God the author of evil, or, in the endeavour to escape from that consequence, it describes Him as so imperfect a contriver that He is forced to intervene from time to time to put things right. In the eighteenth century the discovery of the mechanism of the heavens seemed to give a magnificent picture of a world designed by a great mechanician, and so dazzled the minds of most thinkers that these difficulties were not fully appreciated. But the reflection of the nineteenth century brought them to light, and a crude form of Atheism sprang up, which still exists, and finds its justification in this transcendent view of the Creator's relation to the Universe.

Immanence.

The nineteenth century saw also the growth of a great scientific doctrine of Creation as a gradual process. Herbert Spencer taught Evolution as a philosophy of the Universe, and Darwin applied the principle, in the shape of a specific doctrine, to the whole world of organic life. When interpreted by philosophic theologians these ideas yielded a fresh conception of the relation of the Creator to the world. It was indeed an old theory come back again. According to it, God is immanent in the Universe. He is the Creative Life, or Will, which, working in the vast process, is the source of it all. This grand idea was soon discerned to be in harmony with aspects of Christian teaching which had come down from the earliest days. It threw light on much that had been puzzling or obscure: it allowed the religious mind to move freely in the new worlds opened by science.

It cannot be pretended, however, that the doctrine of the Immanence of God in Creation solves the problem with which we are now dealing. Whether the world be the work of a transcendent Deity, or of an all-pervading Spirit immanent in the universal process, it remains that the

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Supreme Power has brought forth a Universe in which the great problem of evil presses with terrific force on every generation, and concerning which there is no reason, provided by our scientific examination of Nature, for believing that evil will be ultimately eliminated.

Faith.

The faith which holds on to God in unshaken optimism, and trusts in His power and love in spite of every discouragement, will here assert itself. This faith is the inspiring soul of the highest forms of religion. It springs out of the depths of man's spiritual being, and finds its justification in that mystical communion with God which, in some form or other, may be found in all that is best in man's spiritual experience. But we dare not base our argument on this faith, though we must recognise it as a supremely important fact.

The Universe— a System of Natural Causes?

How are we to think of the Universe as a whole?

First, it may be a perfectly articulated system of cause and effect. Every element may be linked to every other element so as to form a complete natural order. In this system there is a perfect connexion throughout, so that every event takes

place as a necessary result of what has gone before. A mind which grasped the Universe with sufficient fullness and accuracy at any moment could foretell all the future. Those who hold this view must believe that the will of man is but one among the many causes which direct the course of events, and that, like other causes, the will is strictly determined by preceding events. It is not spontaneous —free. It is but a link in the chain of necessary causes, producing effects with as much inevitableness as any lump of matter when it is moved on being struck by another: only, in the case of mind, some of the causes are accompanied by psychical concomitants. There are feelings attached to certain movements of the brain which give us the pleasing illusion of freedom.

Divine Predestination.

Stated in this way, the view of the Universe as a whole which we are now considering may be described as an effort to apply the methods of physical science universally. Those who hold this view exclude, as a rule, all supposition of creative will. They regard the mechanism of cause and effect as the final truth. But there long prevailed among Christian

theologians a doctrine of the Universe which was essentially the same, though it was expressed in theological language. God, it was held, fore-ordained every event from the beginning. Some, who hesitated to go so far as this, held that God, though He did not fore-ordain all events, fore-knew them without exception. But this latter view was but a weak yielding of the head to the heart. The old Predestinarians were perfectly right when they insisted on the strictest view of the doctrine, if held at all. Starting with one sole omnipotent Will and regarding all creation as the outcome of its decrees, it follows that the end in every detail is certain from the beginning. Also the human will is but the instrument of the Divine Will, and it is vain to try to relieve the Almighty of responsibility for every human action, bad or good. Everything is executed in perfect accord with the original design. The evil man as well as the good man is a means by which God effects His purposes.

Failure of the Doctrine.

This doctrine, whatever the efforts made to qualify it or soften it away, can only be consistent by making God the Author of evil. Moreover, it destroys the

foundation on which it is built; because in order to affirm the supremacy of the Divine Will, it denies the reality of the human will. Gaining our whole idea of will from our experience of the faculty as it exists in man, we have no right to attribute it to God in a way which deprives man of it altogether. The theory breaks down philosophically as well as morally. The real problem is, how to combine in one scheme of thought a whole in which the human will retains its freedom of choice between good and evil, and at the same time the Divine Will secures the Universe from moral catastrophe, and realises the great purpose for which creation exists. Here is the difficulty which has always confounded the speculative theologian. If he affirms the sovereignty of the Divine Will, he annihilates the human will: if he secures human freedom, he denies the omnipotence of God. This dilemma takes us to the very heart of the great problem before us.

An Imperfect Conception of the Universe.

Before proceeding to another mode of thinking about the Universe, we must consider an imperfection in the modern scientific conception of it as a system of necessarily connected causes and effects.

This naturalistic doctrine, as it has been called, has already occupied our attention. We have seen that it implies that a mind which grasped the Universe with sufficient fullness and accuracy at any moment could foretell all the future. Every event is the necessary outcome of all that has gone before. Is this true as a matter of fact? We have already seen that man is able to control the forces of Nature for his own purposes, using those forces to modify one another. This power has come to man as the result of his discovery of certain laws of Nature. When he finds that there is an order in natural events which he can depend on, he gains a very large and wonderful freedom in directing natural forces for his own ends. In the ordinary experiences of life there is therefore no inconsistency between the uniformity of natural law and man's liberty of action. As a matter of fact, the uniformity of Nature endows man with a vast power to alter the course of Nature to suit his design. It is only an abstract, and wholly theoretical, view of natural law which makes us regard the world as reduced by that law to a system of rigidly determined causes and effects. The mo-

ment we turn from our abstractions to the concrete facts of our experience, we find natural forces plastic in our hands. So true is this that a recent development of philosophy is able to show very strong reasons for believing that the laws of Nature, as we call them, are relative to our mode of grasping our experience of the physical world with a view to the satisfaction of our needs. They have, that is, been shaped by the practical aims of human life.[1] Thus the whole conception of the Universe as a necessitated order of things, in which every event is rigidly fixed from the beginning, breaks down completely. And, it may be added, the materialistic conception of man as an animated automaton, whose movements are accompanied by a series of delusive psychical concomitants, has been discredited by all recent investigations into the relation between the mind and the brain.[2]

Having thus cleared the ground we are in a position to survey our problem with more unobstructed vision.

[1] Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, Eng. trans., ch. ii.
[2] M'Dougall, *Body and Mind;* Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, Eng. trans.

A Larger Conception Possible.

It is possible to think of the wholeness of the Universe in another way. Starting with the postulate that there is a genuine spontaneity in every finite will, and gathering from our experience that this freedom of the will is not contravened, but rather subserved, by the uniformity of the physical world, we gain the conception of the Universe as a spiritual order in which the end is not wholly determined from the beginning. According to this view God does not necessitate the activities of His finite spiritual children. The mechanical necessity of the material world belongs to that world when regarded in abstraction from the whole of reality, as in theoretical science. We know in our own experience that, so far as human power extends, the course of Nature is not fixed, because man is able, within the limits which belong to his finite constitution, to alter it. The whole Universe therefore, including the material world, is subject to change in correspondence with the interplay of the whole multitude of conscious, voluntary agents. And as it is impossible to know beforehand how this interplay of free agencies will work out, we are bound to conclude that there is a real contingency

in things. The history of the Universe is the history of a Great Adventure.

Here is a thought to stir us to hope and effort. But there is also the difficulty that the great adventure may end in failure. What reason have we to think that success is assured? When the outlook on earth is as black as it has been in recent years, why should we believe that things are going better, or will ever go better, in the whole vast domain of being?

A Final Unification.

The only answer we can give, on philosophical grounds, is that we cannot believe in a fundamental contradiction in the ultimate nature of things. There must be a final unity. If there is such a thing as meaning, if the indications which point to an inherent trustworthiness in things are not utterly misleading, there must be some great overruling truth which reconciles, from the highest point of view, the elements which stand in antagonism to one another from our point of view. This is the faith on which rest all life, all thought, all sanity. It means that the Universe is a whole—a cosmos, not a chaos.

Granting this, let us see how it works out in relation to the statement of our problem which we have now reached.

Every effort at solution based on the supposition that the Universe is the expression of a single omnipotent will ends, as we have seen, in complete failure. How are we then to make any progress? By considering the adequacy of our terms. The result of such an enquiry will show that the term Will is not adequate to the task imposed on it. Having arrived at the conclusion that the Supreme Power of the Universe is no mere unthinking force, but a Being who expresses Himself in Creation and in the overwhelming beauty of Creation, and who is also revealed to us in our study of the natural world as fundamentally trustworthy, we are compelled to think of Him in terms of personality, the highest terms we know. We therefore speak of Him as Wise, Mighty, Good. We think of His work as the outcome of conscious, intelligent Will. In this we are certainly correct. But the difficulties we have so recently encountered in the application of the idea of Will to His action must warn us that, however true these terms may be, they are not good enough to contain the full truth of His Nature.

Limitation of Human Knowledge.

When we reflect calmly on the nature of our knowledge and the impossibility

of framing any statement which is not open to dialectical criticism, we must become aware that we, in our life in this world, do not stand on any mountain-peak of vision from which we can survey the whole domain of being. There must be a Reality higher than we are. There must be a Unification beyond the grasp of our thought. We use the best language we have got and find it insufficient.

Now when we speak of God as Omnipotent, we are thinking of Him definitely in terms of Will: we are assuming that the language of Will is able to express with exactness the fullness of His Nature. Is it any wonder that we find ourselves in difficulties? This consideration not only shows why the problem is bound to arise; it also warns us against supposing that by any skilful definition of the word Omnipotence, or by any limitation of its sphere, we can escape trouble.

Love the Unifier.

Let us now turn from our philosophical argument to the vision of Love conquering evil which has been given us by our Christian faith. We have seen that Love in its great work of overcoming the antagonism of opposing wills passes beyond the limits of exact definition. It

can bring about a unification of soul with soul which nothing else in our experience can accomplish. It can annihilate the opposition between self and self, so that each finds its end in the other. If Love be indeed the best expression we can find of the ultimate nature of God, we have reason to believe that, however powerful evil may be, it cannot finally prevail. Love, supreme and all-embracing, and with all eternity before it, will surely find out a way to overcome every opposition. If we believe that God is Love, we must believe that He cannot fail in bringing about a universal reconciliation, and so creating that Kingdom of Love which is the *summum bonum* of all creation. Love as it is in God is, if this be true, that which brings into unity the multitude of wills. It is the great bond of union in the spiritual world.

Here we have an indication of the character of the final truth for which we are seeking. When we keep strictly to the language of personality we are unable to get beyond the antagonism of personal wills: we can find no means of overcoming it. But, we have seen, there must be a Higher Reality in God. What is its

nature? Surely it is now clear that it must be a capacity to gather up into one, in a higher form of life, all the disconnected warring elements of the spiritual world. The great problem which confounds us can be, and will be, solved in God. It must be, if there is to be coherence, or meaning, anywhere. For everything in heaven and earth depends upon its solution. There must be an all-inclusive Life in which we and all created things live and move and have our being. We cannot think this out in the form of a consistent philosophy, because we do not stand high enough in the scale of being; but we can feel it in all the experiences of love and sacrifice, we can find it flashing on the consciousness of the mystic as he loses himself in the beatific vision, we can hear it in the song of the poet as he discerns the presence which disturbs him with the joy of elevated thought.

Meaning of Omnipotence.

We can now understand the true meaning of the terms Omnipotent and Omniscient. They are ways of indicating the all-inclusiveness of the life of God. They use a very imperfect language, the language expressive of personality as it exists in man. They think of God as One who

knows and wills, and are so far correct, but they omit that higher side of God's nature which passes beyond all definition in terms of knowledge and will. As applied to God these terms are poetic rather than scientific. And all our troubles with them arise from the fact that we insist on using them as if they were scientific.

One important consequence of their imperfection is that they separate the life of man from the life of God, and give the impression that God is a remote, all-knowing, Almighty Sovereign, reigning in solitary glory and untroubled happiness in some far-off heaven, while man is toiling and groaning in the labours and sorrows of his life on earth. Here is a very great mischief which has, for many, undone a large part of the good of Christianity. God is not remote from us. We share His life and He shares ours. Truly He is above us, but it is in the order of being, not by reason of any sovereign aloofness. He is Life of our life, and Home of our spirits. In all our afflictions, He is afflicted; and in all our joys, He takes part. His love encircles us, and will never let us go, even though our wilful

hearts may often rebel. That Love will finally prevail over all rebellions.

It would seem, therefore, that the terms *Love* and *Omnipotence* point to precisely the same truth, but *Love* is a higher, more perfect, expression of this truth than *Omnipotence*. Love is not capable of exact scientific definition for the very same reason that leads us to believe that our thought cannot fully comprehend God. Love is that which overcomes the isolation of souls. It creates a bond of union among selves. It possesses always, in *some* degree, the same kind of inclusiveness that God possesses in the *highest* degree. Therefore *Love* expresses the nature of God as nothing else can express it.

The All-Inclusive Life of God.

How, then, are we to think of the whole—the Universe, included in the all-encircling life of God? It is not a mechanical system in which every event is settled beforehand. There is no such thing as fate. It is a multitude of spirits sharing a common life. On the lower side this common life is presented to us as the vast world of Nature. From a higher point of view it is the all-embracing life of God. And God is the All-Inclusive, not

by virtue of a mere selfhood standing in perpetual antithesis to the natural world, as some idealist theories represent; but because He is higher (properly *the Highest*) in the Order of Reality, and therefore *more than Personal.*[1] Possessing all the attributes which constitute personality, He yet, as the Supreme All-Inclusive, passes beyond personality. Within his super-personal life the Universe moves forward to an end which is determined by the Divine Freedom co-operating with the innumerable freedoms of all spiritual beings. The end is not settled beforehand, because it depends on an innumerable multitude of free decisions. The life of the Universe is a vast adventure. All that we can really *know* about the end is that it will be the triumph of Love. It must be, because God is all-inclusive.

Thus we realise the meaning of the term Omnipotence. *It means that God's Nature is such that things cannot go finally wrong.* It means that all opposing wills must and shall be subjugated by the power of Supreme Love.

[1] On this conception see the writer's *God and Freedom in Human Experience.*

But to reach the triumph of love in the great final consummation, measureless sufferings may have to be endured, measureless evils overcome. Only by the awful path of sacrifice can the Eternal Love move to victory over the oppositions of perverse wills. Here is the eternal significance of the Cross of Christ.

But for such an end NO sacrifice is too great. It is all worth while. Life is worth living, and death is worth dying, and every pain is worth enduring; for Love is supreme in the Universe, and the end for which Love is working will surely be attained.

III

THE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

By LILY DOUGALL
(Author of "Pro Christo et Ecclesia")

In the last few years we have all met men and women, not without claim to be regarded as thinkers, who asserted that the war, with its unreasoning passions, recrudescent superstitions and tyrannies, its harnessing of so much applied science to destructive ends, had proved, *either* that the evolutionary process is aimless and chaotic and that there is no such thing as human progress, *or* that the condition of further advance is frankly to repudiate our present moral values in favour of class- and race-selfishness and the will to dominate our fellow-man.

The present paper is an enquiry as to whether a steady tendency toward anything that may be called good can be discovered in the processes of biological development as a whole; and, if so, to

what further human development that line of tendency points.

What is the General Course of Natural Evolution?

Whether or no there is any breach in the continuity of development between "star-dust" and the beginning of life it is not my purpose to enquire. For such a breach we have only negative evidence, and it is only romantic persons who build much on negative evidence. Personally I see no more difficulty in expecting to discover the development of life from what we call "the inanimate" than in accepting the fact of some of the subsequent changes within the sphere of animate existence which we know have been brought about by biological development. Be that as it may, we know, at any rate, that there is no real breach of continuity between the most primitive forms of life and humanity. We know, too, that man as an animal, since he reached the human stage, has done far more to alter other forms of life on this earth than has the oak or the rose, the horse or the bee; indeed, he has even done something to modify the weather conditions of "the great globe itself and all that it inhabit." We are justified, then, in taking man as Nature's masterpiece, and, having accepted within

limits the story science tells of the road he has so far travelled, we shall proceed to enquire whither natural evolution would appear to be taking him.

What Is the Goal of Human Evolution?

Perfect correspondence with environment is the aim of Nature for every organism. This is a biological commonplace. Adopting this principle as our starting-point, we may reasonably ask what we may conceive the tendency of human development to be. And if we conceive some powerful intelligence behind Nature, we are still more impelled to ask what, in view of past evolution, should we reasonably assume to be the further purpose of that intelligence with regard to man. Humanity at present corresponds very imperfectly with its environment. From this imperfection arise all those calamities in which humanity fights a losing battle with the forces of destruction, and succumbs. But if there can be said to be any ascertainable aim in natural evolution, it must be the attainment of a more perfect correspondence of man with his whole terrestrial environment.

What Does such Correspondence Involve?

It is of first importance, then, that we should enquire what such correspondence

would involve. What type of man does our present degree of intelligence tell us the race must produce if humanity is to correspond perfectly with its environment?

(i) Bodily Fitness.

We shall agree that the most fundamental requisite is physical health and strength. Any race of plants or animals which succumbs easily to blight or disease fails to persist. By some system of eugenics and hygienic environment it might be possible, in the course of a very few generations, to produce a type larger, stronger, more beautiful and more prolific than man now is—a type also more immune from disease. Such a type would mark a fresh stage in development.

(ii) Mental Fitness.

But physical fitness is not enough. Herd animals roaming fertile plains in the past have exceeded anything that man has attained in health and strength, beauty, fecundity, and immunity from disease, and were yet at the mercy of cold and famine, and, above all, of man and his weapons. Mere physical fitness might be developed without increasing intellectual power. As it was by reasoning from observation that men learned to overcome difficulties of climate by means of gar-

ments, huts and fire, to use tools and weapons, and to make the simplest rules of social organisation, it is obvious that the ascendency of the human race on the earth has been due to the development of intellect. Man's further correspondence with his physical environment must be by means of applied science—of which it may be here observed that eugenics itself is one of the youngest and crudest branches. We must, as a race, learn not only to combat but to prevent disease, not only to reap the fruits of the earth, but to improve those fruits and increase their yield. We must learn either so to adapt our industries to the weather, or so to control the weather, that droughts and floods shall no longer bring us destruction. We must learn to make the ocean not only a highway, but a safe highway; and the same must be done for the highway of the air; and many other discoveries we must make.

Now all this will mean a high degree of reasoning power and scientific imagination. Therefore the type of man to which the lines of tendency in Nature point must be not only physically but intellectually superior. If we conceive of such a superior

class developed in all countries which have now a high civilisation, we shall perceive that they would be markedly different from the majority who either had not been selected for improving, or from various motives had refused to improve, themselves. Perhaps most of us would need to think of ourselves as remaining in the inferior grade.

(iii) Ability to Get Rid of Inferior Races.

Again, before the higher grade of men can be free from peril of disease, false ideas and social ferment, the problem of the more weak, more ignorant and backward members of the human race must be grappled with and solved. The militarist has always a very simple answer to the problem of inferior races—subjugate or else destroy. He is, indeed, a simple person, and can give no other sort of answer. But as long as multitudes of the lower type exist anywhere upon the earth they will be a constant source of physical disease and false ideas, which might attack the children of the higher type unless they could be completely segregated from them. Would such segregation be possible?

As a matter of fact the strictest barrier the world has been able to set up has been

caste. This may prevent intermarriage and social companionship; it cannot prevent infection of physical disease or of passions and ideas. When rage or panic seize a populace no caste within it will remain unmoved. Of two classes, either may be the object of the other's rage, but the rage will be infectious. Either may be the object of the other's fear, but the fear will become common to both. Each may express its emotions in its own way, but the emotion, if it be passionate, will surge from class to class. Ideas in the same way leap the barrier of caste.

Intellect, which is the eye of the mind, may originate evil as well as good. The unintellectual herd animal is never tempted to take up with either the better or the worse habits of those of another herd. He cannot form attractive pictures of novelty within his mind and brood upon them until they obsess him. But man, the more mentally developed he is, the more is he open, through a lively imagination, to the forces of suggestion, imitation and sympathy.

It follows, therefore, that if we had upon the earth a race of beings physically so much superior, and mentally so much

more active, than we now are, that they were able to dominate the forces of Nature, their children would be quick to observe and keen to interest themselves in all humanity. They would discover a thousand reasons for companionship with the rest of us. Through compassion, mere love of novelty, affection, or through lust, contamination with the notions of such civilisations as we now have would take place. The sons of the gods would take to themselves wives of the daughters of men: the daughters of the gods, "divinely tall and most divinely fair," would develop most unaccountable attraction for inferior men. The dream of the eugenist, or indeed of any other scientist, can never be fully realised until the stupid, weak or unwholesome human beings harboured by our present civilisation have left the earth.

By (a) Military Means.

But even supposing a class of supermen could effectively solve this problem of a subjugated race, it appears to be a pure assumption that the quality that enables a man to subjugate and domineer will always be the quality supremely necessary for persistence and development. Even the conquering races of history have, as a matter of fact, passed away. Does his-

tory show that any people who have so established their dominions by conquest as to have no fear of invasion or revolution, have thereupon settled down to agree among themselves? We all remember toiling in our childhood over the complex conditions that marked the internal disintegration of military states. In the history of Rome, for instance, it was comparatively easy to render some account of our lesson while we were following the exhilarating accounts of conquering armies; but when it came to the quarrels of factions in the victorious State, we remember what a sense came over us of a warring world of which we could form no satisfying imaginative picture. If we look at the matter psychologically we are bound to admit that any set of people trained in habits of warfare will naturally tend to continue to settle their differences by that method. They will remain united only so long as, either in reality or in their belief, they are opposed by an external foe. Take away the foe and you will not give peace to the belligerent. Belligerence is a habit of mind; it is more than that, it is the outcome of the deep, fundamental animal instinct of combativeness,

which, if turned against mankind and trained into the active habit of killing men, will not subside into quiescence simply because external enemies are vanquished.

The soldier who is so trained that skill in arms and strategy are both the game and the purpose of his life has naturally small faith in other methods of dealing with an obstinate opponent. The superman, if he is to conquer the world by arms, must be such a soldier; and if he is such a soldier, when he has conquered the world he will not agree with all his fellows as to the best form of government, nor settle down in loyalty and obedience to a government he dislikes. Such supermen would inevitably practise the noble art of war upon one another. They will indeed have been trained to believe war to be necessary for a man's right correspondence with his environment; it could not be otherwise.

But should war once break out between the supermen of the scientist's dream, their end is near. War and eugenics cannot be practised together at any stage of development, for warfare eliminates the most fit, and that usually before they become parents. It contributes to the popu-

lation not only the maimed, the halt, the blind, but the neurasthenic. If the ever fresh discoveries of science are to render men's engines of war more and more destructive, if the higher vitality and intelligence produced by the eugenist are to be exercised in fiercer and fiercer conflict, the race of supermen must soon destroy itself.

(b) Social Means.

It thus becomes evident that if man is to correspond more and more perfectly with his environment he must outgrow the use of such weapons as will finally be turned upon himself, and learn to get rid of backward humanity by some other method than subjugation or destruction.

We have seen that the race which is to inherit the earth must develop superior physique and superior mind. And this is not enough; it must also develop superior social talent. The leaders of the human family must have social faculties and social skill which will enable them to get rid of the inferior races by getting rid of racial inferiority. To discover what social faculties and what skill would be required to raise the whole human race, let us make a brief survey of the past progress of civilisation.

The Story of Social Progress.

Let us trace this general progress as seen in the case of an apple-grower—a man who devotes a certain bit of ground to apples in order to eat them, barter them, or distribute them over the community in exchange for an income. Historically we first meet this gentleman building his rude hut under a wild apple tree; in fact, he is perhaps at this stage a woman (as an Irishman might say); for men are migratory and husbands are various. She builds her hut because she must shelter and rear her children; and she throws stones at other women from adjacent huts if they try to take the apples. Perhaps she invents the first rude bow or sling. In later generations we find one man settled down with one woman under the tree. He defends the property now from other couples in the same group. These tree people are slow in forming common laws, but by degrees it is found convenient that a number of men with apple trees should agree not to steal from one another, and to join together to defend their property against external foes. At this stage they are beginning to improve the culture of grains and fruits; but let us talk only of our typical apple. Obviously here, for

the first time, there is a little leisure and wit to devote to the cleaning of bark and the pruning of branches and the sowing of pips. By degrees, as the community becomes more consolidated, and there are longer periods without invasion, the system of grafting is invented. The apples become sweeter and larger, and are of more value to the community. No great advance, however, will be made as long as the owner has to spend a part of his time in warlike exercises and a part in actual war, and while he still knows that he and his rights of possession are liable at any time to be swept away by a stronger enemy. When, with the next advance in civilisation, it is decided to set apart a certain number of men for war, and allow the apple-grower to concentrate on apples, the bit of land becomes more prolific and the owner richer. Ah, richer! Comparative wealth brings in a new set of thieves. The poorer men of his own community have now to be guarded against, as well as hostile armies. If he began with a friendly alliance of men who all had equal wealth, it is different now. Some have failed; he has prospered; and he sets up a wall, a gun, and a man-trap to defend his goods

against the vicious poor. This, again, takes part of his time. His cultural operations are not purely scientific until another lot of men are set apart to defend the orchards of the rich from the thieving class of their own nation. This gives a security never known before, and what may be called the real science of pomiculture begins. Science is the accumulation and classification of the world's knowledge upon any subject, with fresh observation and experiment on the basis of this tabulated knowledge. Science can only progress when a community has arrived at a large degree of security, and when living is no longer a fight for the necessities of life.

Perhaps we are inclined to think we have now brought the apple-grower to such a degree of success that nothing further is to be desired or looked for. Let us consider. He is paying a large tax now for army, navy and police, money which, from the point of view of apple-growing, could be better spent upon scientific appliances of all sorts, and investigation into the nature and cure of apple diseases and apple pests. But that is not all. The police, however active, do not exterminate

the vicious or careless poor, and to these belong ill-kept apple trees, which are a fruitful source of disease germs and pests, travelling lightly on the highway of the air and ever making fresh havoc with the rich man's trees. Much of his time and money is spent upon the war of defence against these invisible marauders. Again, a man's mind does its best work when his spirits are tranquil or exhilarated, and this man's spirits are constantly worried, not only by these same pests, but by the fact that there is always a certain amount of thieving in his community which the police, however efficient and well paid, cannot prevent. The spirit of the thief is infectious. It gets into trade; it gets into labour; and as long as detection and coercion are the methods relied upon for fighting it, it will be there to defy them by invisible means—the over-reaching and deception of buyer and seller, the laziness of the labourer. The man who is really keen to get at Nature's best secrets concerning apples, and to produce the best and the most from any bit of ground, cannot long be either jolly or serene with pests and dishonesty bred at home. We had almost forgotten the national enemies,

but they are still a menace. What is the condition to-day of the apple-orchards of Belgium, of Northern France, of Serbia, of Roumania, of Poland, of south-east Russia? And yet in all these countries security was supposed to be bought by setting apart a large number of men to defend the national boundaries from hostile armies and the orchards from thieves. We are to-day living in the stage of civilisation to which we have brought our apple-grower. Clearly his plight is not satisfactory. If we consider how he could learn to correspond better and better with his environment, it is obvious that without the financial tax on his resources and the mental worry caused by the dishonesty of his community he could, even in times of peace, produce a better apple and a better orchard, while in war areas, under present conditions, he and his apples are wholly destroyed.

If we go back we shall find that the first security of the primitive apple-grower was procured by his social talent rather than by his belligerence. As long as he defended his apple tree single-handed he had no security, and it produced only small, sour fruit; it was only as his

social alliance with a larger and larger number of human beings was secured that the peaceful periods of successful apple-growing became longer and longer. It may be urged that this was because the larger community, and then the larger nation, had stronger armies and finally a stronger police force. That is true, but it is not the whole truth, because the strength of the large army and the large police force depended quite as much upon the development of social virtues in those men as upon their warlike training and equipment. If as large an army or police force could have been got together out of savage tribes, no amount of training in war or of equipment would have kept them from quarrelling with one another. It is therefore only by the development of a reasonable temper and a regard for the common interest within the area of the nation that a large measure of security has been realised. Is it not, then, strictly scientific to assume, as a working hypothesis, that it is by the further development of these social virtues, in himself and in all other men, that the apple-grower will attain the higher ideal which he is now able to conceive, and that, with perfect

security and a greater vital energy, he and his fellows may at last succeed so well that there may not be a little child anywhere on this earth's surface that will not have the pleasure of eating a large, juicy apple every day?

The upshot of this survey is that if man is to correspond to his environment he must learn to correspond entirely to its chief factor, his fellow-man; and to do that he must learn to deal with hostility and dishonesty by some social means more effective than the anti-social way of destruction or suppression.

Dangers of Suppression.

Psychology has taught us that instinctive impulses which are driven under through fear—*i.e.* suppressed against the will and emotional tendencies of the subject—produce evil consequences in the subject, and hence in the community. This is equally true whether the impulse be for what the apple-grower, or modern moralist, would call good or evil. The instincts themselves are non-moral, for they grew lusty in the race before those social values we call moral were formed. They are all capable of wholesome (*i.e.* of social) or unwholesome (*i.e.* of anti-social) satisfaction. If anti-social satis-

faction is sought, it is necessary for the salvation of society either to kill off the seeker or to educate him to find a social satisfaction for his instinctive impulses. Merely to suppress his impulses and save him alive is to keep a plague spot of moral, mental and physical evil in active ferment. We must ultimately find some other way of dealing with objectionable habits and propensities than the way of the sword and the prison.

Our only course is so to develop, by education and political arrangements, the social virtues of ourselves and all our neighbours that our natural instincts will find wholesome expression, and the impulses arising from them be trained to serve social ends; and this must be done, not by any external authority, but by these persons themselves. We must find some way of persuading and helping every man to reform himself from within.

And what is true within the nation will obviously be equally true in international affairs. The impulse to be a criminal nation must be so dealt with by education and example that the nation feeling the impulse will control and supersede it.

In such persuasion of criminal neigh-

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bours or criminal nations what part can the sword, the gun and the man-trap play? Or even if all swords are beaten into policemen's batons, what part is the baton to play? We are not here considering ethical values, still less making moral or religious assumptions; we are simply enquiring how the apple-grower may correspond with his environment of domestic thieves and hostile nations. If our psychological premises be correct, it is evident that the area of the sword and the baton must be gradually reduced until the criminal maniac, among individuals and among nations, is regarded as the only fit subject for their exercise.

Man a Fighting Animal.

Many will say, "That might be all very well if it were possible, but it is not. Man has always been a fighting animal and always will be. Without the outlet for his fighting instinct he would never develop his other powers." There is both truth and folly in this retort; and first let us consider the element of truth.

We have seen that man's combative instinct is one of the deepest in his nature, and that it must always have play. It does not follow that he need always be fighting with his fellow-man. It is man's

combative instinct that makes him refuse to be beaten by circumstances of any sort. In all adventure, in all enterprise, the combative instinct comes into play, for it is the desire to overcome rather than yield to circumstance that makes advance possible. If man had more ambition to do and dare in the fields of applied sociology and the other sciences, he would get full exercise for the combative instinct without quarrelling with his fellow-man. If there are such beings as angels in a condition we call heaven, they cannot accomplish any difficult task without vanquishing difficulties; and if they have no difficult tasks they are not in our spiritual universe.

How Development May Come.

Even in early stages of biological progress each step up has been taken by creatures who refused to yield to circumstance. At every stage in evolution Nature has, so to say, put out an advertisement: "Wanted, a number of combative folk prepared for adventure at all costs." She did this when all the little life germs in the warm mud were hesitating as to whether they would go in search of food or wait for it, and those who answered the advertisement became the ancestors of the animal world. Another time when she

advertised for adventurers, some of the water lizards who responded took to the dry land, some, later, to the air, and became the parents of the mammal and the bird. Each advance was made at the risk of life, and was always a great adventure, a great achievement. The first mother who went hungry to linger over the care of her child a day longer than necessary had answered the same advertisement; and the first ape who risked his standing in his tribe for a new idea became the father of men.[1] Nature is still hanging out a placard with the old advertisement—"Who will make the new adventure? who will risk all for an idea?" When people venture their all for a new ideal, the result is the development of new powers.

We have much to do if the use of force upon human beings is to be pushed steadily backward until it is only required for the temporary restraint of the maniac; and if such diplomacy as may be described as the art of getting the better of your

[1] In discussing man's relation to allied vertebrates and mammalia, Professors J. A. Thomson and P. Geddes, *Evolution* (Home University Library), p. 99, remark, "The real distinctiveness of man from his nearest allies depends on his power of building up general ideas, and of controlling his conduct in relation to ideals."

neighbour by veiling some part of the truth is to be considered a disgraceful expedient, except as a last resort in dealing with lunatics. To attain such an end men must learn, by taking the utmost pains and by enduring persecution and mishaps with the greatest hardihood, to acquire new insight into justice, to see with an opponent's eyes as well as with their own, and to believe in the opponent's virtues as well as in their own. It is necessary to convince the leading spirits among the youth of every nation that the welfare of their race depends upon their bringing all their powers of reason, humour and endurance to the reconciliation of man with man and class with class and nation with nation, and that the sanctions of war and criminal law are, at the best, a temporary expedient. It will require all the enthusiasm, the ingenuity, the courage and endurance of the young and the intelligent to master the problem and become efficient in any branch of conciliatory and remedial work. Here indeed is work enough, risk enough, for all the best faculties of anyone who would give his life for the good of his country or of the world.

By devotion to such work a new and

higher faculty of human tact would develop. Tact is the power to conduct combats of mind with mind on the higher plane of goodwill. Possibly with right eugenic conditions and proper environment, in two or three generations a race might arise who, while approving only right conduct in their neighbours, and acting with entire frankness and sincerity, would yet be able to live on sympathetic terms with the unthankful and the evil.

If ultimately no such race arise, we shall be pushed off the board by some other and different race. Unless our sun should enter the Milky Way and crash into some other star, astronomers now predict that our earth may turn for some hundreds of millions of years under its genial rays. That would give plenty of time for humanity to decline and for some new kind of monkey to develop a greater social intelligence than ours. If we failed, the push of life would be in that direction, for, as we have seen, the tendency of biological development is toward the production of some animal who will perfectly correspond with the whole of terrestrial conditions. But the younger and more

hopeful among us will think twice before abandoning man's claim to inherit the earth.

We proceed now to consider the falsity involved in the sentimental cry that man has always been a fighting animal and must always fight.[1] The only reasonable ground for the idea that man's combative instinct can only find expression in quarrelling with his fellows lies in the implied assumption that man cannot change his ways. Such an assumption can now only be made by those who think in terms of a past generation, that supposed human history to have begun only four thousand years before Christ and to be nearing its end in the nineteenth century.

Can the Leopard Change his Spots?

Since the Eolithic Age is there any department of life in which man has not changed his habits? Men did not, in the beginning, wear clothes, yet the habit of wearing clothes is now tolerably well established. Again, man's anatomy proves that he was originally a vegetarian like the apes; yet he became a parasite upon his herds, first drinking their milk and then eating their superfluous young;

[1] See page 84.

in fact, whether for good or evil, he has become carnivorous; and if we reflect on the apparent impossibility of the horse, the cow or the monkey eating flesh, we may realise what an extraordinary power man has of changing his habits. Again, there was a time when man was a migratory creature, changing his abode with the seasons, acquiring no property or sitting lightly to his booths and crude plantings. Or, again, there was a time when the idea of each man or woman having only one mate seems scarcely to have been conceived; whereas now it has become quite a prevailing habit. And these changes have involved the regulation and training of instincts quite as fundamental as that of combat.

What are we to think about the Palæolithic men who developed the high art of painting animals and of carving in stone and ivory? Where did their civilisation disappear to, with all that their art implies? The men who occupied their place in the Neolithic ages knew nothing of art; their attempts at it were of the crudest. Here was change, but this time for the worse, and that may happen again. And these Neolithic men, whose blood

may still persist in our veins, what of their habits?

We know that between the time when human beings first began to use iron instruments and to make pottery, and the time, let us say, of written history, they had in many ways completely changed their social habits. It is mere ignorance of the dawn of history, of folk-lore, and even of the Old Testament, that makes any one say that "history repeats itself," or that man cannot change.

And in historic times we can see that, although changes sometimes come so slowly as to be scarcely perceptible in the course of ages, they sometimes proceed with great rapidity. There is the case of modern Japan; while in China and India we find ideas and customs clearly described in literature dating before the Christian era, and that have remained unchanged until some twenty years ago, are now in some parts rapidly disappearing. Or, again, examine the case of the Negro transplanted from savagery into Christian civilisation. I have seen, in the mountains of North Carolina, small holders of pure African breed living in all respects in a more refined and

intellectual way than the poor whites beside them. We have changed our habits before, for better or worse, and shall again.

At this hour—whether we consider the peace settlement satisfactory or not—the most enthusiastic militarist may well stand appalled at the havoc of war. The following is a conservative estimate of loss, given by one of our most reliable newspapers, and based only on the death returns *admitted* by the various armies:—

"The total losses of the Powers opposed to Germany and Austria during the whole or part of the war were about 5,500,000, excluding the very large number of deaths of French civilians, of which we have no trustworthy estimate at hand.

"On the other side, Germany has reported 1,611,104 dead; Bulgaria has 201,224; and those of Austria-Hungary and of Turkey respectively are cautiously estimated at 800,000 and 300,000, giving a total of a little over 2,900,000. Added to the Allies' total this gives some 8,400,000. The American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief estimates at 4,000,000 the number of Armenians, Syrians, Jews, and Greeks massacred by

the Turks during the war, and it is believed that over 1,000,000 Serbian civilians died through massacre, hunger, or disease caused by the war. Medical experts have more roughly estimated at 4,000,000 the additional mortality from influenza and pneumonia attributable to war conditions. With the addition of some 7500 neutrals (mostly Norwegians) killed by German submarines, the grand total approaches seventeen millions and a half. But of course it is impossible to calculate the enormous number of other deaths to which the war has contributed."[1]

And for each one slain we may surely count another who lives on hopelessly maimed or wrecked.

Since these facts were published the medical estimate of human losses by influenza has arisen to more than twice 4,000,000. This pestilence is but one of the diseases that are the camp followers of war; but it is the most notable, not only for the tale of its victims, but because it seems to reflect the very temper of the God of War in choosing for destruction the young and the strong, who ought to be the parents of the coming age. If the

[1] *Manchester Guardian*, February 27, 1919.

human race is to survive we must somewhat change our habits.

Shall Man Rise or Become Degenerate?

All the facts of biological evolution deny that history repeats itself, or that the future shall be like the past. The ages of the process of development are many and long, but nothing remains the same, not even the hills that we call eternal. Since the time when man was merely a pack animal he has developed individual self-consciousness, which has brought the need for more frequent adjustments of social life. The change going on in humanity, as in everything else, must be either toward social development or social degeneration.

The Victorians, by the mouth of Tennyson, asked a pertinent question:

A monstrous eft was of old the Lord and Master of Earth,
For him did his high sun flame, and his river billowing ran,
And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's crowning race.
As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe for his birth,
So many a million of ages have gone to the making of man:
He now is first, but is he the last? is he not too base?[1]

[1] *Maud.*

The more recent Georgians put the same misgiving in another way:

"The plasticity of the organic type is the one thing which gives us hope for the future. Was there not some prophetic significance of this kind in the words spoken by Ophelia in her madness: 'They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord! we know what we are, but we know not what we may be'?

"But Rome was not built in a day, and the change which can be effected in a single generation will be infinitesimally small. And though we cannot hold the extreme form of belief in this plasticity which was entertained by Ophelia, who quotes without comment but, as the context shows, with approval the statement that the owl was a baker's daughter, we may effect some alleviation in the suffering caused by the knowledge of what we are from the fact, now established, that we know not what we may be."[1]

The Other-Worldliness of Christianity.

What has all this to do with Christianity? Nothing at all, many people would say; for Christianity, they hold, is a system of religion designed solely to

[1] *An Introduction to a Biology*, by A. D. Darbishire, pp. 112-113.

educate the human spirit to correspondence with a spiritual world quite different from this earth, and failure to desire and correspond with this present material life is the best preparation for the Christian heaven. They tell us that many of the greatest Christian saints have exemplified their entire incapacity to correspond to the things of earth, and that their Divine Master was in this respect their prototype, that the most characteristic of His sayings exhort His followers to the renunciation of all earthly ambitions and cares, and demand that they should follow Him in disregarding the things of earth in order to attain an immortal heaven.

Now, of course, the religion Christ taught is centred in the unseen in two ways. First, the life of the individual is conceived as only having its beginning in the animal body of sense, and to the individual a future is offered that will redress the injustice of the present; and, secondly, the life of the individual is conceived as sustained here and now by the strength of God, and enlightened by the vision of God. But to suppose that the duty and privilege of the individual is not concerned chiefly with the welfare of the future race

on earth is, I venture to believe, a mistaken interpretation of Christ's teaching.

First Objection to the Traditional View.

My reason for thinking so is twofold. In the first place, man's advent involved the success of the adventurers among the protozoa, among the lizards, among the early mammals, among the monkeys. If, then, God made man in order that his eternal good should involve failure to correspond with his terrestrial environment, it is certainly odd that His way of making this animal—whose glory was to be his failure—was the evolutionary method, which involves a series of preparatory terrestrial successes extending over some hundred million years. If we bring God into the matter at all—as the Christian is bound to do—it certainly looks as if the push of life toward the terrestrial masterpiece must be some manifestation of God's mind.

Second Objection.

Secondly, a closer study of the Gospel records suggests that the "world" which the Christian is urged to give up is not the terrestrial environment of the Christian Society. Such phrases as declare that God's Kingdom ought to come and His will be done on earth, or that Christ must return to earth to reign, may indeed admit of

diverse interpretation; one thing they cannot mean—whether they be taken literally or as poetic allegories—they cannot mean that the Christian Society ought to fail from off the earth in order that some fitter community may survive.

The Principle of Adventure.

If, on the other hand, we regard Christianity as *par excellence* the religion of adventure for social ends, we see through the whole course of evolution that the mainspring of progress is the principle of hazardous adventure for racial ends.[1] This was dimly manifested in the earlier, more clearly in the later, stages, but first made completely explicit in the life of Christ.

Many of the more recent works on biology dwell upon the element of adventure, even within the sphere of subconscious life, at the turning of the ways in biological destiny.

[1] The scientific acknowledgment of the disinterested element in evolution is seen in the following passage: "That increase of parental care, that frequent appearance of sociability and co-operation, need far other prominence than they can possibly receive even by some mildewing attenuation of the classic economic hypothesis of the progress of the species essentially through the internecine struggle among its individuals."—Thomson and Geddes, *op. cit.*, pp. 246-247.

"Far and away the most interesting question which can confront the student of life (is) whether evolution is a process of which a simple mechanistic explanation has been discovered, or whether it is not a mysterious process which we are scarcely able to understand at all yet, but which may, perhaps, be due to *deliberate striving* (the italics are mine) on the part of the animals and plants which have taken part and are taking part in it. And many will lean to the latter interpretation, because they find it inconceivable that we should know as much about so vast and complex and close a thing as evolution as we should do if the mechanistic explanation of it by natural selection were true."[1]

Professor Bateson, a leading exponent of the Mendelian School, remarks: "The conception of evolution as proceeding through the gradual transformation of masses of individuals by the accumulation of impalpable changes is one that the study of genetics shows immediately to be false. . . . For the facts of heredity and variation unite to prove that genetic variation is a phenomenon of individuals.

[1] Darbishire, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

Each new character is formed in some germ-cell of some particular individual, at some point of time." [1]

At any rate, whatever may be the explanation in these early stages, later evolutionary changes have always come about through conscious adventure, when the adventurer is called upon to give up the familiar "world," *i.e.* to set forth upon some unknown path—and that always at the risk of loss; for where the herd or flock or pack or tribe is concerned, the adventurer runs the risk of being done to death by his fellows before he can suffer much of the loneliness and difficulty which, if he survive, he is certain to incur.

"It is certain that man did not arise from any of the known anthropoid apes (gorilla, chimpanzee, orang and gibbon), but from a stock common to them and to him; therefore it is likely that the human stock had diverged before the time when the anthropoid apes are known to have been established as a distinct family, namely, in the Miocene. It is possible that a man arose as a mutation, as an anthropoid genius in short, but the fac-

[1] *Mendel's Principles of Heredity*, W. Bateson, p. 289.

tors that led to his emergence are all unknown." [1]

Well, suppose an anthropoid ape genius was the first man. Is it not likely that he was stoned to death by his tribe for violating some of their taboo? That is the way apes treat a freak. We may imagine that his daughter, finding herself an outcast, cradled her baby, who so far had hung round her neck, and built a little shelter to keep off missiles. Inheriting her father's genius, she would be bound to run the gauntlet, and if she survived she might thus launch the human race. Social habit or custom is the law because it is the only security of the animal herd and the human tribe; but without deviation from it there can be no progress; though, on the other hand, if such deviation were not punished there would be no safety. Between this Scylla and Charybdis the human race has had to steer its way.

"The Cake of Custom."

"We are apt to think of the savage as a freakish creature, all moods—at one moment a friend, at the next moment a fiend. So he might be, if it were not for the social drill imposed by his customs. So he is, if you destroy his customs, and

[1] Thomson and Geddes, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

expect him nevertheless to behave as an educated and reasonable being. Given, then, a primitive society in a healthy and uncontaminated condition, its members will invariably be found to be on the average more law-abiding, as judged from the standpoint of their own law, than is the case in any civilised state. . . . Meaningless injunctions abound, since the value of a traditional practice does not depend on its consequences, but simply on the fact that it is the practice. . . . How to break through the 'cake of custom,' as Bagehot called it, is the hardest lesson that humanity has ever had to learn. . . . To break through custom by the sheer force of reflection, and so to make rational progress possible, was the intellectual feat of one people, the ancient Greeks; and it is at least highly doubtful if, without their leadership, a progressive civilisation would have existed to-day. . . . Just as a boy at school who happens to offend against the unwritten code has his life made a burden by the rest of his mates, so in the primitive community the fear of a rough handling causes 'I must not' to wait upon 'I dare not.' One has only to read Mr. Andrew Lang's instructive story of

the fate of 'Why Why, the first Radical,' to realise how among savages—and is it so very different among ourselves?—it pays much better to be respectable than to play the moral hero." [1]

The Function of the Prophet.

Every fresh stage in human evolution has come through the genius who sees that it is necessary to break through the "cake of custom," and the hero who responds to the call. We have various words to denote such seers; we call them discoverers, philosophers, or prophets. A prophet is one who sees into the inner truth of things, sees what is necessary and eternal in contrast to what is provisional and passing, with which other men are absorbed. If the race to which the prophet belongs listen to his word, the future accords with his vision and he is said to have foreseen; but if his fellows do not attend to him the future does not accord with his vision. Insight, not foresight, is his characteristic.

The Blessing of the Persecuted.

At every stage of man's evolution his progress has depended upon men who would walk by insight or faith in an idea rather than by what was obvious in their environment. Such men were persecuted,

[1] *Anthropology* (Home University Library), R. R. Marett, pp. 183-187.

but, bringing salvation to their race, they might well rejoice. They might well say of their fellows, all following one another and approving one another, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you." In an evolutionary sense these things have been true in every crisis, small or great, of our racial history.

Hence it follows that whoever would be the apostle of an essential idea which the world around him has not yet assimilated, must, if that idea is to generate new customs, be first and foremost an adventurer, a crusader. He must always be willing, nay, eager, to break with the traditional world around him, to "hate" his kindred who have no ideas but those common to that world in comparison with the love he has for the new idea, the new custom, or the great personality that embodies these. He can only do this at the risk of all that he has formerly held dear, and at many times and places at the risk of life itself. In a word, he must know the meaning of Christ's injunction, "Follow me." And in so far as Christ's teaching is "other-worldly," in so far as He reaffirms the most ancient of human beliefs, that life does not end with the dissolution

of the body, He does so whilst declaring that it is not the respecter of the taboo or the conventionally moral person, but the adventurer, "he that will lose his life," who will gain the next life. If so, we may divine that the next life will be a life of further adventure in which the conventional would not feel much at home; perhaps also that the adventurer will continue to be cognisant of the beneficent earthly results of his adventure. In fact, Jesus Christ affirms that even on selfish grounds the pioneer of a better day may rejoice even though he be miserably done to death in this world, and not even canonised afterward.

The Inheritance of the Friendly.

We come to another point of connection between Christianity and man's fitness for survival. We have seen that when human evolution had reached the stage at which man had so far developed individual self-consciousness and reason as to be able to direct his natural instincts into social rather than anti-social channels, his further advance depended upon his power of friendship, that just in so far as his capacity for reasonable friendship exceeded his quarrelsome tendencies, he corresponded with his terrestrial environment,

and just in so far as he remained quarrelsome he has failed so to correspond; and we have come to a crisis in the world's history when his failure is perhaps almost more apparent than his success, and many are questioning whether he is going backwards or forwards, whether degeneracy or a new impulse of life is going to set in. Do we not find that Christianity and Evolution teach the self-same lesson as to what must be the way of progress for humanity?

Christ taught that a time would come when man should live in a blessed condition of perfect correspondence with his environment—that is, not only with God the Creator of all, but with men and with all the conditions of life. This state of things He expressed in the phrase "the kingdom of heaven," "the kingdom of God." Now, the type of man that should thus make a success of life is described in various ways. He is to be complete in goodness as God is complete, *i.e.* he is not only to be negatively inoffensive, but positively and triumphantly generous to the unthankful and the evil, to those who do right and to those who do wrong. He is to love, not only his friends but his

enemies. He is to endeavour to understand rather than to condemn, by clearing away from his own vision all that impedes it.

In fact, if we want to find out what is the relation between the teaching of Jesus and man's correspondence with his environment we had better discover what the word πρᾶος means. We shall find that it does not mean poor-spirited. The πρᾳ̃ός εἰμι of Matt. xi. 29 is spoken by Jesus the lion-hearted, who stood alone against the whole world. Of the poor in spirit Jesus had something else to say; but of those who triumph by the dignity of gentleness He said, μάκαριοι οἱ πραεῖς—"Blessed are those who proceed with sweet reasonableness, for they shall inherit the earth."

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IV

POWER—HUMAN AND DIVINE

By LILY DOUGALL

Force and Its Direction.

THERE are few words the significance of which is more vaguely conceived than the word "power." There is physical force directed to no definite end or purpose—the power of the storm or the earthquake. There is physical force harnessed to some useful end—as when we speak of horse power and water power. Wild horses course the plains; the waves of the sea swell and break; electricity flows over the earth's surface and visibly cracks and sparkles in the clouds; but we only call these power when they can be used as the tools of purpose. So, too, with persons. A strong man had an invalid wife; he was able to lift and carry her, and people spoke of his physical power. All the neighbours knew, however, that she, being a fretful woman, could make him do just what she liked. One of them, who had

just referred to him as a "powerful man," remarked, with unconscious repetition of the word, "She is the power in that house." The essence of power is thus seen to lie less in force than in direction of force.

Lower Construction and Destruction.

We may often see two children trying to play together with toy bricks. The elder, having reached the constructive age, is endeavouring to build a castle, church or tower. The younger only desires to see the erection big enough for him to knock down with a clatter. Here we get two sorts of power pitted one against the other—construction against destruction. The elder child is quite strong enough to injure the little one in such a way as to prevent his constant mischievous onset; but, being civilised by more years in the nursery, he controls his temper and perseveringly circumvents the mischief-maker. If we were asked which child showed the greater power, we should say that the power of mischievous destruction was negligible compared with the power shown in the ability to construct and in self-control. In the household nursery no one would question this judgment. We are not as ready, however, to say in the larger nursery of souls which we call the world

that the ability to construct is power in comparison with which the ability to destroy is negligible; or that the ability to bear with a mischief-maker and circumvent him is power compared to which the ability to injure him is not worth calling power. At the root of our respect for injurious and destructive power in the world is the time-honoured belief that God wields such power. Yet it is possible that by further investigation we may come to question this belief.

Omnipotence and Choice of Means.

What is involved in saying of any person that, in his sphere of life, he has supreme power? Our ideas are not clear. A factory manager may be able to use horse power or steam power or electricity to run his machines, but he must choose between them; whichever he instals prevents the use of the others on the same machines. Clearly supreme power, or omnipotence, in the factory does not mean the power to use them all.

What would supreme power mean in the elder of the two children trying to play with the toy bricks? The baby knocks down his brother's tower before it is half finished. The elder has the power to construct his tower and to knock

down his little brother; but the thing that he set out to do was to build the tower with the little one's help, to show the little one how to build. His real purpose being to play with his brother, he cannot accomplish this by the use of physical strength. He is obliged to apply the constructive ability with which he is manipulating the bricks to the little one's character, and contrive by peaceable methods to make him desire to see the tower properly built. He cannot both coerce the little one physically and also have a happy hour with him. He must choose between the exercise of one form of power and the other. And if he is looking to the future he must choose peaceable methods if he is to have any enjoyment in nursery companionship. The ordinary child will, of course, choose neither one course nor the other, but vary between the two, sometimes trying physical coercion, sometimes amiable management. But we all recognise that the more intelligent the bigger child is, the less he will knock about his little brother.

Let us revert to the case of the man with the invalid wife. For this man to be omnipotent in his household he must

be able, not only to carry his wife as he choose, but to direct her thoughts and her will instead of being directed by her sick fancies. Let us suppose this the fact, and the man's will dominant. If she remained miserably ailing he would require the power to heal and strengthen her. But if he succeeded in getting her on her feet he obviously could not both use his power to carry her about and at the same time use his power in getting her to walk of herself. The physical power he had exercised would fall into disuse because incompatible with the power to teach her to walk unsupported. He could not both habitually pick up the woman and carry her to the shade of an apple tree, and also exercise his higher power to enable and incite her to take herself there. He must habitually cease to do the one thing before he can habitually succeed in doing the other. This is evident.

Further, if he wanted a friend and a helpful companion in his wife, she must cease to be the mere mental automaton controlled by his ideas and wishes. If he were a normal man he would want her to bring her own contribution of ideas and purposes to enrich their common life.

But if he desired that, he would need to cease his mental control over her thought and will. He could not both cause her to go from the house to the shade of the apple tree and also cause her to choose what she will do—whether remain in the house or sit under that or some other tree. He cannot both control her mental life and have an intelligent and responsive companion. His power to control her mind must fall into disuse if his power to evoke a responsive friendship in her is to be exercised. The power to do the thing he most wants to do, and the thing best worth doing, requires for its exercise the abrogation, not only of physical force, but of any form of mental influence which even approximates to compulsion.

In the light of this conception of the highest kind of power, let us review the religious hypothesis of the Divine government of the Universe, and in particular the belief that the material and spiritual environment in which humanity developed was the expression of the power of a beneficent Creator. In so doing we must realise that God cannot use incompatible powers to attain an end. We must set before us all the facts of development as

we know them, and then ask ourselves to what sort of spiritual power they bear witness.

The Sanction of Consequence.

The historic teacher of mankind has been experience—experience which teaches what are the consequences, good or evil, which follow from certain acts. When we think of human life in its first beginnings, when the mother carried about her babe—as do the apes still—clinging round her neck till a year old, when clothes and huts were not yet invented, the sanction for any action evidently was the advantage to be gained or the disadvantage to be avoided by doing it. He or she who could best foresee the results of any action and act accordingly, would thrive. The dog who picks quarrels with dogs he cannot master is soon finished in the fight, or if he rashly wriggle too far into a fox-hole he is entombed, or if he try to swim too swift a river he is drowned. It is thus by the sanction of consequences that dogs have learned to be wary of catastrophe. In their case we do not enquire whether such catastrophe be the punishment of a moral governor; the system of calculable results is the government under which they live. In the same way man, at his

first emergence must, we should all admit, have been educated by natural consequence. Every other form of education is more rapid, though less effective, than the education of experience; but possibly man had time to learn by the education of experience, for geologists tell us that it may be some 250,000 years since man began to use stone implements. We may well believe that the Divine Mind contrived the school of experience, and that the Divine Spirit quickened man's mental powers in that school to discover the good and to avoid the bad; but his discoveries were made, as far as we know, by observation and trial.

Historical Notions of Divine Power:

And the human mind, groping for an interpretation of its material and spiritual environment, made childish guesses at the truth. Everywhere we find primitive man firmly believing in unseen deities who demand that he shall do things on other than experimental grounds. Everywhere we find man living under the supposed sanctions of Divine rewards and punishments other than those of natural consequence. He thought of God's power as chiefly shown in arbitrary punishments. In every primitive religion man attributed

(*a*) The Vindictive God.

his customs or morals (*mores*) to revelation, and assumed Divine punishments as their sanction. Thus Mr. Marett tells us that "almost insensibly we are led on to the subject of religion from the study of the legal sanction; this very term 'sanction,' which is derived from Roman law, pointing in the same direction, since it originally stood for the curse which was appended in order to secure the inviolability of a legal enactment." [1]

The schoolboy who remarked that in ancient times God liked a great deal of cursing was unconsciously criticising the early notion of revelation. Human imagination, playing about the unseen and unknown, invented what it called revelation, and the proof of this is the childish and often vicious nature of the so-called revelation.

(*b*) The Divine Will Fantastic.

"There is no end to the curious and absurd customs, generally supported by supernatural sanctions, by which the actions of savages and barbarians are commonly surrounded and hemmed in. We have to remember that, in the case of existing savage communities, the growth and multiplication of customs may have been

[1] R. R. Marett, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

proceeding through all the ages during which the few progressive peoples have been evolving their civilisation. But enough is now known of the primitive age of ancient Greece and Rome to show that the great civilisations of these States took their rise among peoples bound hand and foot by religious customs and law as rigidly as any savages, and to show also that the dominant religious emotion was fear." [1]

We are not on this account driven to deny that man has been the subject of such revelation as comes by the quickening of his own judgments of beauty and truth and social value. The progress that on the whole and in the long run has been made in these affords a strong presumption that the fetch of human genius is the prompting of some greater Spiritual Reality.

But my point here is that the chief exercise of power attributed in primitive times to God was destruction, and the chief sentiment attributed to the Divine mind was legal or moral indignation. We can easily understand how this came about. Among gregarious animals we

[1] *Social Psychology*, Professor M'Dougall, p. 308.

know that if one animal transgresses the habits of the herd, even when circumstances compel it, the herd will turn upon it and put it to death. This action is part of the instinct of self-preservation; for what binds the herd together and makes it strong in the face of solitary beasts of prey is that all its members act together, in fight or in flight, under one impulse. Humanity, gathered in tribes, had the same instinct. It was entirely necessary for the preservation of primitive groups, and as reason developed a reasonable explanation was sought and ostensibly found.

Professor M'Dougall thus explains the process. Primitive man, like ourselves, was apt to let pass the genial and regular processes of Nature by which he constantly profited, while disastrous events struck upon his nervous system and aroused his fear and indignation. Death, pestilence, famine, storm, flood, required explanation. Standing out, as they did for him, with no background of natural causes, these were attributed to whatever god or gods he could conceive.[1]

[1] *Pace* the earlier archeologists, the normal good cheer and happiness of primitive man appears to me clearly

"The cause of every calamity befalling either the individual or the community would be sought in some offence given to the beings thus vaguely conceived; and primitive man would be apt to regard as the source of offence any action at all unusual, at all out of the ordinary, whether of individuals or of the community. Hence the conceptions of these awe-inspiring beings would lead to increased severity of social discipline in two ways: firstly, by causing society to enforce its customary laws more rigidly; . . . secondly, by producing a very great increase in the number and kinds of customary prohibitions and enforced observances. . . . Although many of the modes of conduct prescribed by primitive and savage custom and enforced by supernatural sanctions are not such as we regard as moral, . . . yet we must class the observance of such custom as moral conduct. For the essence of moral conduct is the performance of the duty prescribed by society, as opposed to the mere following of the promptings of egoistic impulses.

Result on Tribal Emotion.

suggested by the fact that he was shocked and impressed by misfortunes, which must therefore have been the exception, not the rule.

. . . No matter how grotesque and, from our point of view, how immoral the prescribed codes of conduct of other societies may appear to be, we must admit conformity to the code to be moral conduct; and we must admit that religion from its first crude beginnings was bound up with morality." [1]

"If my next-door neighbour breaks a taboo, and brings down a visitation on himself, depend upon it some of its unpleasant consequences will be passed on to me and mine. Hence, if some one has committed an act that is not merely a crime but a sin, it is every one's concern to wipe out that sin, which is usually done by wiping out the sinner."[2]

The Genesis of Moral Indignation.

This anger on account of a breach of custom or law is moral indignation. We all remember the story of Achan and the "wedge of gold" and the "goodly Babylonish garment." It was the thought of the moral indignation of Jahveh against Achan's disobedience that caused the children of Israel to slay him. Samuel expressed what he believed to be the moral indignation of Jahveh against Saul be-

[1] Prof. M'Dougall, *op. cit.*, pp. 306-7, 313.
[2] R. R. Marett, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

cause he had not slain the cattle of the Amalekites. In such times there was no distinction drawn between the impulse of indignation or moral anger and the impulse of retribution. Anger and the will to punish were regarded as one thing. The punishment followed the crime not as a natural consequence but because it roused God's indignation. It was necessary to change the indignant feeling in God's mind if the punishment was to be stayed.

No doubt many primitive guesses at the interpretation of life were less melancholy. Prosperity of all sorts very soon came to be attributed to the favour of the unseen Power—just as disaster was attributed to God's anger at breach of custom or law, or, as we should say, his moral anger—and joy in this favour gave rise to the gentler religious sentiments of gratitude and reverence. What I would here emphasize is that over untold ages and over all parts of the earth man has regarded Divine power first and chiefly as destructive, and has attributed to God such moral indignation and such vindictive punishments as we, at our present stage of development, cannot possibly believe to have been Divine. Let us also

Godliness and Cruelty.

notice that whenever moral indignation and punitive action was attributed to God, the members of the human group took upon themselves to mediate the Divine punishment by themselves evincing the same moral anger and by devoting the offender or offenders to death or outlawry, and the power of the State rested on the right and the will to injure the wicked. Thus we see that from untold generations we have inherited an aptitude for moral anger, a disposition to regard this moral anger as the first essential of a religious character in individual or nation. In the past it has undoubtedly been one chief factor in binding together human groups, but it has hindered the development of an aptitude for charity and social forgiveness.

We may undoubtedly observe a large difference between the more primitive and the more advanced morality: the first is, in the main, a slavish imitation of outward acts; the second becomes more and more an effort to adapt principles of conduct held in common by a group to ends approved by the group. It still remains true that the sentiment of outraged propriety at any action which defies a commonly accepted rule of right, and the

determination that it shall be punished, are the same in the Red Indian of the Saskatchewan and in an Oxford don, was the same in ancient Israel or in ancient Babylon or Rome as it is in a modern Wesleyan preacher, and by each and all has always been attributed to the God or gods in whom they trusted.

Summary. It is therefore important to notice that, whether from the beginning man's development might have followed a higher line or not, in the line it actually followed his conception of God as vindictive, with its accompaniment of human "righteous indignation," has in the past been both the cement which held together human groups until they were strong enough for expansion, and the prison which bound them so that they could not expand into higher social developments.

Wanted, a Higher Morality. Thus we have reason to suppose that in this historic conception of Divine power, and its consequent conception of human duty or righteous sentiment, there was something right and something wrong; and if we are going to survive by improving on the past, this is the most important matter for analysis and revision. Most of the human groups of the early world

failed to emerge into nations because they were hide-bound by the fear of Divine anger and the strength of their own moral angers; by their consequent lack of charity and failure to exalt the kindliness which seeks to understand rather than condemn. But some groups which had attained large development seem to have fallen to pieces because they lost vivid belief in Divine government and ceased to have passionate moral sentiments. We must not avoid Scylla by casting our ship into Charybdis. We must stop and think. Vindictive and punitive passion is destructive, and in the past God has been thought of as destructive. One curious witness to this is the phrase, "act of God," still used in all our bills of lading, meaning, "unforeseeable disaster." But we have seen that the vital principle is always constructive; life is always evolving higher and higher organisms. Man's mind is predominantly constructive. God's mind must be wholly so, and the Power of God will express itself only in ways that are constructive.

Education by religious experience has been, and must still be, a constructive force. At first sight many have been inclined to say that neither in the process of natural

or of religious evolution can we trace any evidence whatever of Divine action. But we have agreed there is reason to believe God's mind is seen in the trend of natural evolution, and, *a fortiori,* we may see God in the educative power of experience by which man's spiritual life has developed. Further, we have direct evidence of the sense of God in that we find humanity busy, from first to last, seeking to correspond with an unseen spiritual reality. It is true that men have, for the most part, attributed false notions and false dispositions to God, and so misinterpreted their own daily duty. But this very fact must lead us to mistrust our own preconceived notions of the Divine will and the divinely appointed moral sanctions, it does not justify the assumption that we are living in no environment of Divine government closely concerned with the detail of our lives. It must eventually lead us to cast about for a conception of Divine government as it concerns daily duty which will more closely fit the facts of human development.

Power as the Reign of Law.

God is not God unless He is power. Omnipotence belongs to our conception of God. Unless He govern our Universe

He is not really God, but only a minor deity. But we have seen that an omnipotent being cannot use all sorts of forces indiscriminately to one end. If God has brought our world into being in order that life may develop under the training of experience into free intelligence, able to have communion with Himself, it must be a world bound by the law of inevitable consequence, it must be a natural system of calculable effects. Physical disasters must follow ignorance or neglect of physical law; mental degeneration must follow the lower spiritual choice. God cannot, while teaching by experience, be acting as a *deus ex machina,* by direct fiat of His will adjusting physical disasters to those who fail in such virtues as justice, mercy and probity, adjusting such psychic effects as hard-heartedness and self-deception to those who fail in applied science. The lack of domestic virtues could not, in the nature of things, have brought on the Flood or a plague of poisonous serpents, nor could failure in religious ritual have brought a pestilence or the invasion of a foreign army. The causes of such disasters are lack of precautionary measures or of cleanliness or of diplomacy. We

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have for the most part reached a stage where we are all ready to accept this. We realise that if, as Christians are bound to believe, the Divine Spirit is brooding over humanity to bring forth a people which will freely choose the good, the natural results, both physical and spiritual, of all actions must be allowed to have full sway. The Divine power must be sustaining a system of cause and effect. Kind action and clever action will each have different sorts of beneficial results on the soul of the doer and on the community. Both sorts will be necessary to make the good life—the good man or the good civilisation. The stupid and cruel actions will have their results; both will be necessary to bring about degeneration.

The sustaining of this calculable Universe is one manifestation of the power of God, and it is a manifestation without which this could not be a training ground for souls. Yet other, and in a sense more characteristic, manifestation of His power may be seen in that inspiration of souls by virtue of which they can learn wisdom, transmute suffering into joy by the alchemy of purpose, and evil into good by forgiveness; and these powers are fully

Power as Inspiration.

compatible with that dependability of God which we call in the reign of law.

First, with regard to inspiration of the intellect, it must be, as all would admit, of the nature of tutoring. Our own earlier and cruder method of teaching was by imparting accumulated scraps of knowledge, and beating the pupil who did not acquire them by rote, under which method only those with some great aptitude acquired much knowledge. Now we have learned by long experience that the best tutor is he who helps the pupil to discover the needed knowledge for himself, and to reflect fruitfully upon his discoveries. Under this new method a much larger proportion of pupils become able to make their own contribution to the world's wisdom. We cannot attribute to the Divine educator the cruder method. But the bestowal of spiritual help to discover and to reflect is quite compatible with the exercise of the spiritual power that sustains the sequence of cause and effect.

This is also true of the gift of such inspiration as would show man how to conceive a purpose and end that would convert his suffering into joy. We know

that hardship, even most painful and long hardship, is counted all joy for the sake of winning a race, or gaining a game, or discovering a "pole," or making a fortune or a reputation. The parent who would restrain a youth from such enterprise would be, not kind, but tyrannical. The inspiration, then, that enables man to conceive a glorious goal for the race and for each individual, could cause him to count it all joy to fall into divers distresses without any abrogation of the sanction of consequence involved in the reign of law.

Power as Moral Recreation.

An even more signal exercise of Divine power would surely be to transmute the evil of wrong choice into good without interfering with the psychological law of cause and effect. Is this possible? Nowadays we hold no brief for the theory of man's total depravity. We are ready to believe that from the first to the present time the natural good and evil in him have been pretty equal; but it would seem inevitable that his evil acts and dispositions should estrange him from his Divine spiritual environment. But, mark this, when man has done what could repel a spiritual being, he has done a spiritual

act, and thereby entered into a realm of being higher than the animal or non-spiritual life. And what if God will not be estranged? Then surely the whole spiritual Universe, instead of being antagonised, has its antagonism transmuted into a greater opportunity for the erring soul.

Let us try, for just one moment, to forget all theological definitions of sin or expiation, all definitions of Jew and Gentile and Christian, and think only of the agelong drama of human development, of the men and women and children of the old Stone epochs and the new Stone epochs and of the three Bronze ages, of the cave dwellers and the lake dwellers, the forest dwellers and the tribes of the grass lands and the corn growers of the river valleys, all products of a greater antiquity, all gone before our histories begin, and each one—if the Christian faith is worth anything—dear to the heart of God. If we mean anything by "the fatherhood of God" we mean that in sympathy God must have been with them in this world system of cause and effect, and that through all the school of experience He must by sympathy have rejoiced in

their joys and suffered in their pains. There must have been a sufficient end, an end worth this Divine suffering; and that end, as far as we can see, seems to have been the making of souls or spirits capable of uniting in a perfect social environment or whole. In these souls there were three elements of what we should call evil action. There were the hereditary characteristics of the ape or the tiger or—as we may also say—of the donkey, which would often overmaster the newer impulses of intelligence and rational values. There would also be what we now call neurasthenic reactions. Just as animals that have been cruelly treated or greatly frightened become, as we say, "vicious," so man must often have become abnormal through disaster. Evil done through these causes God could only pity and condone, for the individual man or generation was not responsible. There is a third element of deliberate wrong choice, when an opportunity of doing something good is seen and rejected. However small this element of free choice between good and evil may have been in the life of primitive man, it is by this element that he becomes a free spirit, a reasonable soul. It is only

as an intelligence freely chooses to embrace or neglect an opportunity that it proves itself free, that it becomes free in the choosing. And whether the choice be right or wrong, it is a spiritual act. Such acts when right would naturally bring man into better understanding of God and make him open to Divine inspiration. Only by such free acts when wrong could man antagonise a just God. But what if God refused to be antagonised? If through His pain of disappointment He transmuted what tended toward estrangement into a closer bond of continued inspiration, that would be an act of personal power of a higher sort than any other we can conceive.

Mercy and Wrath.

Now this is just what the religious mind of the past, groping in many directions after truth, has often grasped as "mercy" and seen as a correlative of God's reputed tendency to wrath and destruction. God's mercy has often been apprehended by spiritual souls and expressed in visions of surpassing beauty, but unfortunately it has always been swiftly hedged about by doctrines which conditioned the Divine mercy while declaring the Divine wrath to be unconditioned. At best, it has been

held, God only forgives when man first repents.

Forgiveness Prior to Repentance.

Let us, for the time, forget these doctrines and ask ourselves how, when primitive man first began to make free choices between good and evil, God's forgiveness might have waited for his repentance. Nothing is more perfectly obvious in studying early religions than that man's notion of good and evil did not represent the realities. In this the repeated cry of Hebrew prophets corroborates anthropological research. Justice and mercy were overlaid in primitive minds by ritual exactions. For example, cannibals might repent and offer propitiation for a breach of fantastic taboo, but they did not repent that attitude of heart which caused them to devour their enemies. Yet these same tribes are found to have such glimmerings of real mercy toward child and beast as could only be won by possibility of deliberate choice between good and evil. Opportunities of pity seen for a moment and, when rejected, as swiftly forgotten, could not be repented of. And yet such rejection of better impulses would be the real sins of the savage against God. Can we suppose that God's forgiveness here

waited on human repentance? If, on the contrary, God's love transcended the offence, that means that God took some other way of dealing with and overcoming the evil. The true alternative to punitive anger is not, as our doctrinaires often assume, *laisser faire,* nor is it indifference or good-natured tolerance. These dispositions are good on their right occasion, but very evil on an occasion that requires *either* punitive anger *or* that tremendous achievement of love which transforms the evil into a higher good by the self-giving of the injured spirit. Whatever else forgiveness be, it is not, and never can be, indifference to the repetition of the sin. The pious voices which resound from half the pulpits in Christendom to warn us against supposing that God forgives too easily are the voices of men who never themselves really forgave. The experience of true forgiveness would bring home to them its essential cost. It is as intelligent to talk of easy suffering or easy agony as of easy forgiveness. Forgiveness, in the heart of a child or an archangel, in the heart of man or of God, is in essence the struggle between the universal spiritual evil and universal spiritual

True and False Forgiveness.

good, a conflict in which good triumphs only through the voluntary suffering of the injured. Each being who forgives endures to the extent of his capacity the whole spiritual conflict. No one who has suffered agony desires to suffer again. Suffering is not suffering unless it create the desire to get rid of its cause. To forgive indicates the most eager desire that the offender shall not repeat the offence. It involves such self-giving as may be possible to the end that the offender may reform himself till offensive actions become impossible to him. In the atmosphere of realised forgiveness offence by a responsible agent gradually becomes impossible. Even in human society it is easy to see that the supreme power is forgiveness in that it accomplishes the highest possible achievements in reformation of the highest natures.

Forgiveness Is Power.

We can see, too, that, for the attainment of this particular end, forgiveness and moral wrath are not compatible methods, nor is habitual forgiveness and habitual wrath possible in the same character. If, then, it be God's will that in an atmosphere of more and more clearly recognized forgiveness offences should become im-

possible to responsible spirits, He is exercising supreme power if, while sustaining this whole universe of cause and effect, He is forgiving every offence of each sentient creature that develops moral responsibility by the education of experience.

We live amid much confusion of thought about forgiveness. One says, "I forgave the poor devil because I felt sure he could not help what he did." Another says, "I forgave because he knew no better." A third will calmly tell us that he forgives easily "because it is not worth while to worry over offences." Nothing of all this is forgiveness. It is quite true, as has been said, that it is well to overlook most of our neighbours' annoying ways on these grounds. Just as we cannot forgive a storm or a fire for the injury it does us, so we cannot forgive a human agent unless we believe him to be responsible. Nor do we forgive if we are passing over offences for the sake of our own peace. We can only forgive when we suffer acutely under an injury and know that the agent was fully responsible. We can only forgive by setting the welfare of the offender before our own wel-

fare. Forgiveness is the greatest achievement of human love, and accomplishes more than anger can to elevate both the soul that forgives, the soul forgiven, and the community.

How God Can Forgive.

If that be so with men, in transferring the figure of forgiveness to God we must believe that His forgiveness is infinitely more—more costly, more efficacious.

But in our thought of God's forgiveness there is the same confusion, inverted as it were. One says, "I do not see what God has to forgive in human conduct. Man's evil deeds are mostly due to heredity and environment; ignorance, unmanageable passions and ill-balanced nerves account for most of them. Men do not ask to be born; God is responsible for the mess they make of things." Here, again, we suffer from our own armchair or cloistered doctrinaires, we who in the past have too often talked as if every man carried a rule of ideal conduct and could, if he would, conform all his conduct to it, so that he must always think of God as displeased with all his shortcomings. Such absurd teaching naturally causes men to blaspheme. We cannot believe that God can forgive the lion for tearing its prey, or the ape for its

chattering mischief, or the donkey for its most distressing lamentations. Whether these creatures have or have not developed along the line of God's ideal, the individuals are in no way to blame for their habits. And so with man. The successive generations bring with them stupidities and irritabilities innumerable. They perform millions of horrid actions, for which no individual is responsible. God, who sustains the fabric of the ages, must look upon all such evils with indulgence and kindly excuse, must see an educational purpose so great that they are related to it as nursery faults are related to the adult life. But it remains true that just in so far as each human person has a reasonable soul, is in any sense a free spirit, he has his glimpses of a higher possibility, his moments, or it may be hours, of higher opportunity, which, if he would, he could embrace. If we consider that God is in sympathy with all the pain, as well as all the joy, of the long creative process, if we have set aside the old, impossible doctrine that all is predetermined, we can understand somewhat of the disappointment God must suffer when man rejects his opportunity. It is this pain of disappoint-

ment inflicted by man that must evoke either punitive anger or forgiveness.

Proof that God Has Forgiven.

And that it has evoked forgiveness follows from this consideration: forgiveness refused would have meant inspiration withheld. And if God had withdrawn His inspiration from unrepentant man because of his free rejection of opportunity, mankind could not have gone on to develop more and more freedom of choice. For by our hypothesis—which is that God helps man by indwelling him in so far as man will accept that indwelling—we are driven to believe that all progress in the attainment of truth and beauty and brotherly love comes by the inspiration of God constantly proffered to the developing mind. We must believe that whenever man sees his opportunity and makes the higher choice, he opens, as it were, the doors of his soul to this inspiration, and the result is not only a tendency to develop a good habit, but clearer vision. And if he make the wrong choice, his power to make it involves at least a momentary glimpse of a higher good. He must have perceived the opportunity that he has rejected. He is therefore on a higher plane of being than if he had not perceived; and

this advantage must in some way be utilised by God if His purpose is the elevation of man's soul. If man's rejection of the good caused this advantage to be entirely lost, by causing the withdrawal of God's friendly environment and inspiration, there would be no human progress. If, however, God, by His forgiveness, transmutes the evil of rejection into further opportunity, we can understand the progress which has taken place.

It would thus seem that the mere fact of human progress tends to establish the presumption that the true God, so far from being, as man has supposed, in a condition of almost incessant anger and constantly engaged in launching thunderbolts, has surrounded His developing creation from first to last with a spiritual atmosphere of gracious friendliness and free forgiveness.

God's Character and Man's Conduct.

If we thus conceive of Divine omnipotence—if we believe that God's character is truly love, and not the amalgam of hostility and love which has so long been accepted—it will naturally have a great effect upon our conception of duty. From the earliest days until now godliness has always been the attempt to be Godlike.

All human justice has been the mediation of what was supposed to be God's will and God's action. If God's attitude towards men is one of constant helpfulness in their increasing realisation of truth and beauty and love, then of course that must also be our attitude and our business. If, in this helpfulness, God excuses men for all the evil-doing they are pushed into by heredity and environment, then we also must find means to excuse them. If He freely forgives them their actual sins, then we also must freely forgive them.

In Forgiving Does God Change His Mind?

What is commonly called man's forgiveness of an offence presupposes felt pain, and hostility to the offender, and consists in a change of mind involving instead an outflow of generous sentiment toward him. But when we try to apply the conception to God our difficulty is that though we conceive God as meeting our offences with personal forgiveness, we cannot believe in any change of His mind. With God, as with man, forgiveness must imply pain caused by the wrong done, but instead of the hostility felt towards the offender there is, we may humbly believe, a combative determination to overcome the

evil with good—which involves no change of mind, but is compatible with that generous outgoing of heart to the offender that we believe to be eternal in God, and which we call His forgiveness. As far as we in our limited way can understand, this is the Godlike reaction to all evil, which we should seek to share, and which, when attained, does not involve in man, any more than in God, that unfixity of purpose which is confusing to our sense of right, blinding us to the true righteousness of God.

Two Objections: Now, two objections against this view of human duty are constantly urged—the one, that it is contrary to the revelation of God in Christ; the other, that it is subversive of all law and order, and consequently militates against correspondence with environment and fitness to survive.

(i) The Supposed Teaching of Christ. We must all admit that if we have in Christ a final revelation of God, that revelation must be patient of progressive interpretation. Life is never static, and even by the time the Fourth Gospel was written it was clearly realised that there was large room for the Spirit to take of the things of Christ and interpret them

to the men of that age. If we regard our Lord as the supreme religious genius; if we believe that His spiritual nature was such that, while living under our conditions He was aware of Reality and saw the actual truth of God's attitude to man and what it involved in man's duty, we must perceive that in mediating this to men he must have been hampered, not only by their preconceived and obstinate notions of God and duty, but by the language, and still more by the mental pictures, which these religious beliefs had created. We must therefore expect that in any account of His life we shall find the teaching which was subversive of the religious notions of His time would be that which was most original to Him, and that into the first report of His words and actions, and into all subsequent editings of that report, the shadows of ancestral tendencies of belief and traditional ideas would be sure to press. Such a clue to the interpretation of the Gospels is not subjective. It is a legitimate method of criticism applicable to any ancient teaching.

Incompatible Views in the Old Testament.

We know that all down the ages the conception of God which is set forth in the vindictive Psalms—the conception of

the Divine heart as in a constant ferment of righteous indignation—had descended from untold generations of primitive men, while such glimpses of Divine love as we find in the 23rd and 103rd Psalms are rare, and were at the Christian era comparatively recent. The whole world, therefore, into which Christianity was introduced tended to believe in the efficacy of Divine wrath and human punishments to bring about the ideal state at which all nations aimed. And as human nature invariably attempts to produce a reasonable basis for the sentiments it inherits, most rational argument ran on the same lines. It is, however, also true that spiritual insight manifest in a thread of nobler reasoning had come down the ages. "As the heavens are high above the earth, so are my thoughts higher than your thoughts, saith the Lord." "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." The supreme religious genius of Jesus Christ took up this theme, and by teaching and living He showed that not to the God-fearing alone but to all men was God

gracious. By living and dying, and by giving proof of His continued existence and triumph beyond the grave, He set the Divine seal upon this interpretation of God's ways with men. Such interpretation of God made irresistible appeal to human insight. For the most part, as soon as men have understood it they have accepted it. When "lifted up" before human minds in any intelligible representation, His light has been seen to be light. But the difficulty has been that it has been easier for man to hold two contradictories, to try to live by two incompatible beliefs, than, violating recognised custom, to face the persecution that must come with the breaking of taboo, or to make the adventure into unknown seas that is necessary for the discovery of new worlds. God and Nature called for adventurers, and in the Christian Church the adventurers only set out in cockle-shells and hugged the shore.

—and in Modern Christianity.

We are very busy yet with the effort to interpret the good news of the Kingdom so that it will harmonise with the terrors of Mount Sinai. During the war there has been, even on the part of some of our younger and more progressive theologians,

a good deal of writing in praise of the righteous anger which Jesus expressed against the scribes and Pharisees, of the blaze of manly wrath with which He is supposed to have violently turned the crowds from the Temple courts. All of which is held to sanctify and consecrate our vindictive anger toward our enemies. But, after all, it is well to recognise that this view of Christ makes His character inconsistent with His own teaching. In theological circles we call inconsistency paradox, which sounds mystic and wonderful but does not alter the fact. Or else, if we desire consistency, we whittle away our Lord's teaching in order to make room for the wrath that we so sentimentally love.

Another Interpretation.

But the words and actions of our Lord are susceptible of quite a different interpretation. Take, for instance, the Temple incident. Anyone who will patiently work out the size of the court of the money-changers and observe from contemporary records that it must have been thronged with men of all nations, will perceive that the physical violence of one man could not possibly have cleared the court. Again, the reproaches addressed to the

Pharisees, even if not exaggerated and altered by indignant editors, could all have been said in exactly that temper in which He wept over Jerusalem or prayed that His torturers might be forgiven because of their ignorance. A mother whose whole heart's affection was centred in a reprobate son, who cherished in her heart nothing but forgiveness toward him, once stood up and with strong emotion told him exactly what she thought was the cause of his evil deeds, exactly what she believed would be the natural result if they were continued. Her language was modern and not so poetic as that of the East two thousand years ago; but it came in substance to very much what our Lord said to the Pharisees. It was the verbal expression of her moral vision when applied to her son's life; it came out of a whirlwind of moral aspiration that broke down all reserve, but had in it nothing of the emotion that we call anger. What she saw was the natural consequences of sin; the expression of her vision was the warning of love, exactly the same sort of love as would have made her fly to his aid had he been walking blindfold over a precipice or into a furnace. According to our in-

herited sentiments we do not think that sort of thing sufficiently manly for a man. It is all right in a mother, but had it been father or brother we should think him feeble if incapable of rage. Still, it is quite possible that what we yet call manly we shall learn to call brutal. And, that being so, we have no right to lay it down as an established fact that the conception of God as never angry, as always kind to the unthankful and the evil and always forgiving to seventy times seven, is not in harmony with the revelation of Him through Jesus Christ.

(ii) The Claims of Law and Order.

It is further objected that the conception of God's character and our corresponding duty which I am urging, is subversive of law and order. The late war has already proved very nearly subversive of all law and order in Europe. If that order is to be saved from complete collapse it cannot be by more militarism and repression, but by those compromises and friendly overtures between class and class and nation and nation which are prompted by forgiveness and brotherhood. But the late war itself is the measure of the failure of centuries of Christian teaching which had been one long effort to harmonise the

cruelties of the God of primitive Israel with the character and teaching of Jesus Christ. The time has come when we must halt no longer between two opinions about God.

One chief reason why men suppose that extinction of moral anger would cause the disruption of society is that they have never really grasped the fact that we live in a world in which psychic or spiritual cause and effect is just as calculable and acts just as inevitably as do the laws which govern matter. Even if men do, by loving and forgiving their neighbours, abolish all human punishment, deterrent or disciplinary, they cannot possibly alter the fact that consequences discipline and consequences deter. The system of Nature which we believe God by His power upholds is an order majestic and invariable. This splendid characteristic of Nature cannot be abolished by any human effort. Every sin brings its own measure of psychic disturbance and incapacity for pleasure, and psychic disturbance means ultimately physical degeneration, and degeneration in the individual means degeneration in the community. The only possible way to mitigate this unfortunate

result is by the practice of a virtue that will bring about a greater good. In only one way can God or man save sinners, and that is by persuading them to practise virtues that will bring about a greater corresponding good. If that be so, and if the forgiveness that means the continuance of friendly help and brotherly affection is in reality the quickest and best way of making men good, it cannot be subversive of law and order. We have seen that social goodness is necessary for human survival; it is correspondence with human environment.

Principles and Practice.

But, of course, to see the truth of this principle and to arrive at the application of it are two things separable in time. We learn to walk by falling; we solve our problems as we go along, and we only discover new worlds by setting forth bravely upon uncharted seas. It is impossible to hold the conception of God's power, and therefore glory, which we have been considering, impossible to conceive thus of God's action in the world, without being out of harmony with very much that is of the fabric of our present civilisation. Possessing such convictions, we cannot live without contributing something to its

disintegration by initiating the growth of a better. We cannot live well without working consciously to that end. But it is very easy to live very ill indeed if, in order to uphold God's constructive power, we take destructive short cuts. If we believe, as we must, that the progress of life is the manifestation of God's power, we must remember that the method of life is construction, that even when it brings about alterations or terminates other lives, it does so in supplanting what is by calling into existence something fresh. In deciding upon a practical course of action it is necessary also to think much of the nature of life as exhibited in the long biological process—the distinction between evolution and revolution, the long patience of supersession of higher by lower. We have so much to do that we cannot afford to do it other than in a Godlike way, for only thus shall we avoid the undoing of our own work and toilsome repetition.

Creative Ideas.

Just as certain ideas are fruitful in the construction of, let us say, a dwelling or a political constitution, producing what bears the storm and stress of life, so certain ideas are fruitful in bringing eleva-

tion and enlargement to the inner life, and consequent harmony between the soul and what is most desirable in domestic and public activity. The study of comparative religion has made it appear that man's spiritual life has developed by trial and observation. By these we have learned that hostility to the evil-doer is not God's method nor a Godlike method—that hostile passions do not develop our fullest powers.

Spreading the Light.

By experience we must also learn how to bring this light to the world. We need a true religious science of missionary work. We are only at the very beginning of this; but at least one law of the soul's development in this direction has already been established. We must regard every moral problem as subsumed under the splendour of the whole, and see it set in relation to all the lavish beauty of the Universe, all the gaiety and humour, all the serene joy, all the natural goodness and kindliness of life, as well as in relation to wrong, ugliness and pain. Only by such sweep of thought can we realise the importance of each bit of reformatory work; for the fineness of the whole lends importance to each detail. Only by such

sweep of thought can we obtain patience and a sufficient sense of power to do the work magnanimously and magnificently, with the Divine generosity that God inspires.

It is not true that if God be with us man cannot prevail against us. Those who break with tradition are always condemned, stoned and often crucified; but it is true that if God be with us, not only in our aim but in our method, nothing can prevail against the cause for which we work; and if we believe in immortality we must believe that in the triumph of the cause we shall also triumph immortally.

V

THE DEFEAT OF PAIN

By B. HILLMAN STREETER

The Individual and the Race.

THE facts and considerations which have been adduced in the earlier chapters of this volume go a long way towards establishing the conclusion that *viewed as a whole* the tendency which has expressed itself in the course of biological evolution is one "that makes for righteousness." It is much to have found grounds for the conviction that a glorious consummation awaits the long struggle of humanity—but there still remains the problem of the fate of the individual man meanwhile. It is a great thing to know that the column will reach its destination—but what of the many who drop out on the march?

Practical Aim of This Chapter.

In this chapter I approach the problem of the pain and moral failure of the individual, and I do so with an interest not so much theoretical as practical. I attempt no explanation of its origin or purpose. Pain (whatever its explanation) is part of

the environment in which we have to live. I ask how we can adapt ourselves to that environment, or rather how we can adapt the environment to ourselves—for to do that is the unique biological distinction of man. Can we, instead of being crushed by the difficulties we have to face, use them rather as a stimulus along the route to individual as well as social progress? I ask whether, in regard to the moral failure and the suffering—past, present and to come—which falls within the experience of any individual, we can say, "There is a way out." I suggest that, along lines indicated in the New Testament and confirmed by the teaching of modern science, each one of us may find a way in which to cope successfully with that particular share of the world's evil with which he or she personally is brought in contact. In the first part of the chapter I shall treat of pain as such, without any attempt to discriminate between pain which, like remorse, is connected with the consciousness of moral failure and the pain which is not so caused. Pain can be discussed scientifically as a purely psychological phenomenon; it can also be considered in its bearing on moral values. I

Is there "a Way Out"?

begin with the simpler, and proceed later to the more complex, problem.

Pain

Pain Physical and Mental.

We are apt to underestimate the extent to which pain is of mental origin. Anxiety and disappointment, fear and regret, humiliation and remorse, the sense of desolation and despair, constitute the main burden of civilised man; and all these are of the mind. In normal times the amount of suffering due to causes entirely physical—wounds, accident or disease—would, for the majority of men, be a relatively small proportion of the whole; for the present generation the war has vastly altered the proportion. But even the pain caused by physical injury is determined by mental conditions more than is commonly supposed. There are stories from the front of men in the excitement of battle or retreat being for a long while actually unconscious of wounds received. Experiments in hypnosis, by which sensibility to pain can be either enhanced, so that the touch of a finger feels like a hot iron, or reduced, so that the patient feels nothing under the surgeon's knife, point

in the same direction. Quite apart from these exceptional conditions, every doctor or nurse knows that the extent and acuteness with which pain is felt varies enormously with the mental attitude of the sufferer. That patient feels pain most who most dreads it and who concentrates his or her attention on it most. Again, still more important is the fact that the actual quality of pain and its mental and physical effects differ according as it is borne with cheerfulness or despair, with acceptance or resentment.

Man and Circumstances.

If, then, most suffering is predominantly mental in origin, and if the mental element so conditions both the amount and the quality of suffering purely physical in origin, it is not enough to attack the problem of the world's suffering from the physical side alone. It must be attacked from that side, but it is far more essential to approach it from the side of mind. And precisely for this reason the individual may have hope. He may find himself—he often does find himself—up against hard facts which he cannot alter, or burdened with a physical disability which cannot be cured. But where circumstances cannot be altered it may still

be possible to alter one's reaction towards them.

The Suffering of the Past.

Especially is this true in regard to the past: this cannot be undone, but my reaction to it can be fundamentally changed. I cannot unmake the sins, sorrows and disappointments of the past, but may it not be possible so to change my attitude towards them as completely to transform their consequences in the living present, and thereby, so to speak, to remake the past? Christ taught that this is possible, that the broken-hearted can be healed and that sins can be forgiven. In the following pages I shall attempt to show that both the experience of everyday life and the conclusions of modern psychology prove that Christ was right.

The Spirit and the Letter in the New Testament.

Parts of the New Testament are unintelligible to those who have no special knowledge of the literature of the age in which it was written. Parts, again, show obscurities and inconsistencies which we must attribute to the fact that its authors were trying to express new conceptions and new intuitions by means of language and modes of thought originally adapted to a very different religious outlook—and that one from which they themselves were

only partially emancipated. If we would get at the great ideas which are its essential contribution to human thought and progress, we must turn aside from that exaggerated respect for the exact exegesis of single texts which still hampers many even of those who think they have outgrown the theory of verbal inspiration; otherwise we shall get an impression distracted and confused. But leave on one side exegetical and archæological detail, concentrate only on central ideas, and there stands out from its pages a philosophy of God and man, and in particular a way of approach to the problem of suffering, as clear as it is simple, adequate and inspiring.

God and the World.

In the New Testament, then, so interpreted, I find no attempt to produce a theory of why evil is permitted to exist. Certainly there is no suggestion that this is "the best of all possible worlds." On the contrary, so far from being the best of all possible worlds, it is a world that God meant to be a great deal better than it is. It is a world that has gone awry, and that mainly through the ignorance, the folly, the malice, the greed, and the passions of men. But though the world

is not now what it should be, God intends to make it so. In fact, He is actually engaged in making it so; for God does not stand outside the world serenely contemplating the misery and the strife. He is no doubt in a sense outside and beyond the world, but He is also inside it, immanent in it, as the philosophers say; and by the fact of His immanence He takes His share in the suffering; and God's share is, if I may use the phrase, the lion's share.

Creative Suffering.

But this suffering is not just mere suffering with no end or result beyond itself. It is a means to an end, the means by which the ignorance, folly, malice, greed and evil passions may be overcome, the evil wills remade, and the results of evil action transmuted and undone. But it is not all suffering which has this virtue. The suffering which has power is suffering like Christ's—suffering, that is, faced for the sake of causes and ideals like those for which He worked and died, or borne in the spirit in which He bore His. Christ, however, is not merely our leader and our pattern. He is also, as St Paul puts it, "The portrait of the invisible God." His attitude both to suffering and to evil is

also God's. God shares in the suffering and captains in the fight. And God summons us to assist Him in the task, to enter into partnership with Him—and that not only in the suffering but also in the victory which it brings.

Suffering that Degrades.

This view of the power and possibilities of suffering requires analysis. Much cant is talked about the ennobling and purifying effect of suffering. To an animal pain may be useful as a warning of danger or a spur to activity, but beyond the limited amount required for that purpose it debilitates and depresses. So too with man, the most natural effect of suffering is not to ennoble but to embitter, not to purify but to weaken. Joy is a necessity of life, of the highest life as well as of the lowest. The natural and normal reactions of the organism to suffering are vindictiveness, degradation, peevishness and despair. Where the contrary result is found it is because there is something in man, or in some men, which can counteract these "natural" reactions. And this something does exist.

The "Conversion" of Suffering.

That is the secret, dimly grasped by heroic men and women throughout all the ages, which Christianity first publicly

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proclaimed: the *natural* consequences of suffering can, by the spirit and manner in which it is borne, be not only avoided but actually reversed. Look upon suffering as a necessary condition of labour for any cause worth working for—whether it be the learning of a lesson, the production of a work of art, the bringing up of a family or the steering of a ship to port—and its character is changed. Realise that the stupidity, the indifference, the malice, and the selfishness of man have always been such an obstacle to progress that every forward step must be paid for in blood and tears; that, because casualties are the price of victory, sacrifice, pushed at times to the point of martyrdom, though not in itself desirable, is necessary and worth while—and things are seen in a new light. If it is in this way and in this spirit that the Divinity immanent in the world is suffering, striving, overcoming, then to take one's share in the work is to be allowed, as St Paul puts it, to pay part of "the unpaid balance of the sufferings of Christ."[1] Then, indeed, not perhaps every day and always, but at least in our moments of deeper vision,

[1] Col. i. 24.

such pain becomes no longer a burden but a privilege.

Suffering that Desolates.

No great cause has ever lacked its martyrs, and it is not hard to see how suffering of this kind—suffering voluntarily risked, or even actually challenged, by the sufferer for the sake of a great work or a great ideal—may ennoble and inspire. But a kind of suffering harder to be borne is that which, whether it comes from accident, disease, or from the negligence or malevolence of man, is in no sense connected with, or the direct result of, our efforts for a good work or a great cause. Such suffering, so far from being a price which we pay, and pay willingly, for the sake of the work, is often the greatest of all impediments to it, a knock-out blow which, humanly speaking, makes nugatory all our hopes and our achievements.

Calamity and the Will of God.

The old theology said, "Calamity is the will of God: submit." But is calamity the will of God? The subject is one upon which there is much confusion of thought. No doubt, since God created and sustains the Universe, He is ultimately responsible for everything in it; whatever happens is the result of something He has

willed. But in that sense sin, quite as much as suffering, is the will of God—yet the very meaning of sin is that it is something contrary to His will. But a reasonable solution is not far to seek. God *is* responsible for making a world which is a connected system—a system in which causes always produce their appropriate effects, where good produces good, and evil, evil, and where suffering is one of the effects produced by ignorance and sin. But God is *not* responsible for the extent to which, by the voluntary choice of created spirits, that system has got out of gear—though, if the conception of His work and character implicit in Christianity be correct, He has made Himself responsible, at bitter cost to Himself, for setting it right again.

Character and Conflict.

It is often argued that without some element of strain and conflict the highest type of character could not be produced; and again, that unless the consequences of folly, ignorance or evil choice were really bad, life would be only a game in which, in the last resort, nothing really mattered. But granting this, granted that a world in which suffering and sin are possible is better than one where

everything were necessarily smooth and easy, and therefore a world better worth while creating, what follows? We may readily admit that this actual world can be a nursery of noble souls while Lotus land could not be, yet it does not follow, either that the total amount of evil in the world or the proportion of suffering which falls to the lot of each particular individual is an exact expression of God's will.

Providence.

To refuse to accept the view that whatever happens is in accordance with the will of God, does not mean the denial either of God's prescience or of His providence. An Intelligence which itself upholds the great interconnected system of cause and effect that we call Nature, and to which the secrets of all hearts are open, cannot but know the trend and tendencies of things, cannot but possess an actual foresight of the future which, though falling short of that absolute foreknowledge which is only compatible with predestination, may yet, in comparison with our human foresight, be styled omniscience. Again, the experience of all religious men points to the conclusion that "there's a Divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will." Whether

it be individuals or groups, evidence does suggest that those who "wait upon the Lord," who endeavour, that is, to concentrate their minds upon the Highest in quiet meditation, and act in response to the inspiration which they get, are enabled to overcome difficulty, to escape danger, and, in spite of loss and failure, to achieve high ends. The facts point to a Providence watching over us, guiding us to wise and salutary choice, leading us to the help of others and others to our help; but they also suggest that by reason of deafness and unresponsiveness on our part or on theirs God's plan may temporarily miscarry. The experience of religious people is that they do often, to an extent quite unexpected, actually avoid disaster, they can "tread upon the lion and adder"; but also, where disaster does come, a way of recovery equally unexpected is in the long run provided. Where God does not prevent, He cures.

Bearing of This on Our Ability to "Love God."

The conclusion that we ought not to regard the accidents and calamities that come to us as directly sent by God is one of the first importance for practical religion. It is almost if not quite impossible to look upon the loss or the disease which

crushes or debilitates as a direct expression of the will of God and still wholeheartedly regard Him as our heavenly Father. In the past, and even in the present, there seem to be some who have succeeded in this apparently impossible endeavour; but certainly from ordinary human nature it is too much to ask for a real and true love of God if they are taught to regard *all* the evils that fall upon them as visitations deliberately sent by Him as chastisement or discipline. Of course, if such a doctrine were true we must teach it and take the consequences, but if, as we have seen reason to believe, it is not true, then to decline frankly and emphatically to repudiate it is to take away the key to the kingdom of heaven and hinder those from entering in who otherwise might do so.

The Element of Truth in the Old View.

The explanation of the old theology that sickness or calamity is to be regarded as the will of God we discard; but the practical moral which the old religion drew from it was, up to a point—though only up to a point—quite sound.

"Submission" or "Acceptance."

To repine or to give way to resentment in the face of undeserved calamity is fatal. Unfortunately either repining or resent-

ment is the natural instinctive attitude to take up; and in so far as "submit to the will of God" meant "put such feelings right away," it was good advice. But the right attitude to adopt is, to my mind, far better described if instead of "submission" we say "acceptance." Mere submission to the will of an external power is negative, it is a dull, drab thing; but acceptance of a share, still more the willing acceptance of more than our full share, in the tragedy of life—a tragedy in which God as well as man is an actor—is positive, it has about it something vitalising.

The Positive Attitude towards Pain.

Pain, like other elemental forces in Nature, can be turned to use, but only if the laws of its operation are first understood and then conformed to. *Natura parendo imperatur,* but the "obedience" by which Nature can be mastered is no mere passive submission but an activity which may be called obedience only because it functions always in conformity to laws and principles clearly understood. So it is with pain. Those who meet it clear-eyed and with a positive and active acceptance, who "face the music," as the slang phrase has it, those who are ready

not only to "do their bit" in the world's war but to "bear their bit" in the world's sorrow, make a strange discovery. They find, not only that they are enabled to bear their sorrow in a way which hurts less—for what hurts most in the bearing is that which is most resented, what is most freely accepted hurts least—but that they achieve an enrichment and a growth of personality which makes them centres of influence and light in ways of which they never suspected the possibility.

Heroic Suffering.

Few things can so inspire and re-create the human heart as can the spectacle of crushing misfortune cheerfully and heroically borne; and the unconscious influence which those who do this exert is far greater than they or others comprehend. Here is the element of truth in the common talk about the ennobling and purifying power of suffering; though it is not the suffering but the way it is borne that ennobles. Pain, not just submitted to but willingly accepted, makes the sufferer socially creative. A man counts in this world to the extent that he has thought and to the extent that he has felt, provided always that he has thought and felt in the right way. Suffering rightly

borne is constructive work. He who has "borne his bit" has also "done his bit," and pain conquered is power.

When We Have Failed.

A few are able to bear their sufferings in this way. Most of us have failed to do so, or have succeeded very partially. We have allowed resentment and depression—which, I must repeat, are after all the natural consequences, physical and psychological, of a severe blow—to enter into, if not to predominate in, our outlook. The suffering which, if we had accepted it as a privilege or utilised it as an opportunity (which is Christ's way), would have enriched, ennobled and fortified our personalities, we have faced in a way which has had the contrary effect. We have let it depress our enthusiasms, dim our ideals, sap our vitality. Is there a remedy for this?

The Retrieval of Past Errors.

There is: but it is one which has rather fallen out of sight in Christian teaching. We are familiar with the idea—later on I shall attempt to justify it—that sins can be forgiven, that if we look back upon past errors in the right spirit they can be retrieved. We have all been taught that the degeneration which is the natural inevitable consequence of sin can be trans-

formed, that it need not remain as a standing source of debility in the soul, and that the repentance following after wrongdoing may actually bring about an enrichment and deepening of the personality—"to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." But in ordinary Christian teaching this idea has only been applied to breaches of certain fundamental moral laws. It is not ordinarily applied to the failure to meet suffering in the right way, though this failure is a moral one as much as any other; it differs from other moral failures only in being less commonly recognised as such. But if it be true that sins of one kind can be, as we say, "forgiven"—that is, if their naturally evil consequences upon our personalities can be transmuted by a subsequent change in our attitude towards them and God, so that what once was sheer loss may in another way become a form of gain—the same must surely be true of this kind of moral failure also.

The Reversal of the Past.

And experience shows that we can transform the past in this regard. We can bring up clearly into memory the times when we have suffered and have let that suffering fill us with resentment and

despair. We can realise our error and deplore it, we can say to ourselves: "No; all said and done, I am glad that in the great tragedy of humanity I have borne my part; I am glad that I have tasted of the cup which is the heritage of man." And in proportion as we can say this, and mean it, our whole outlook on life, our attitude to God and man, is changed. We are filled with a new joy—richer by reason of what we have endured; we are inspired with a sense of vitality and inner strength more deeply rooted because of the experience we have passed through. The draught which when first drunk was poison is transformed into wine. The past cannot be undone, but the bitterness and weakness which are its living consequences in the present are not only cancelled but reversed.

Learn or Suffer More.

Suffering is not man's only teacher, as some have seemed to urge—there are things, for instance, which can only be learnt through joy—and it is the teacher whose lessons are the most difficult of all to learn. If at first we decline to learn them, we suffer more; for then we must endure, not only the original pain, but the growing resentment or the life-draining

melancholy which it entails. From this further suffering, consequent on our refusal to learn the lesson first offered to us, another and a different lesson can be learnt. But the actual learning of it awaits a fundamental change of attitude and outlook on our part, a *μετάνοια*, which, like any other form of "conversion," may come to one man by stages slow and imperceptible, to another with a sudden flash, and to others not at all.

The Pain of Those We Love.

There remains the most difficult problem of all. How are we to take the suffering of others, especially of those we love, which we are compelled to witness but are unable to alleviate, and which in many cases we can see is not being borne —and under the circumstances can hardly be expected to be borne—in a way which can be otherwise than degrading and depressing? What of this? There are times when, though we cannot alleviate, we can help them to bear their suffering in the right way; could we completely succeed in this we might perhaps, though with an effort, be content. But there are also times when, called upon to be spectators of physical agony, crushing calamity, or desolating bereavement, all our theories

about suffering and its uses simply shrivel up, and, if we try and put them into words, we seem to ourselves to be as those that mock.

Co-operation with God.

Conquer by accepting. The principle that pain is to be met in this spirit, and not with resentment or despair, needs special reassertion when we thus contemplate the pain of others. For it may be given to us by an act of penetrating sympathy to enter into their suffering and, so to speak, accept it for them, and thereby, either at the time or later on, help them to a right acceptance. Still more necessary is it to remind ourselves that God feels this pain as much as we do, indeed much more, by reason of His more perfect sympathy. This fact points to the solution: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, he shall sustain thee." God, too, is bearing the suffering, but He is bearing it in the right way; and in so far as we can open up our souls to Him, and through communion and meditation enter into His mind, we also begin to bear it in the right way. God's way of bearing suffering, like everything else He does, is creative and constructive; in so far as we bear it in His way, the negative attitude

of repining and resentment will drop away, and we too shall become constructive and creative. The right act or the right forbearance, the right word or the right silence, will be given us; and when these are impossible or inappropriate, the right thought, the right feeling and the right prayer. And often these may be the most effective things of all. Men are all bound together by unseen telepathic ties of mutual influence. Each of us, by merely being what he is, contributes, for better or for worse, more than he knows to the mental and moral outlook of those he lives with, and probably of others to him unknown. He who is trying to bear the suffering of those he loves, with God, for God and in God's way, cannot fail to help them, and to help others also, though he may sometimes have to wait a long while for visible results.

The Present Is Not All.

And in one respect we can afford to wait, for what we have found to be true in our own case must hold good in theirs also. Pain, we have seen, even though wrongly borne at the time, may yet be transformed in retrospect, and defeat turned into victory in later days. If, then, we believe that the growth of souls con-

tinues after this life, we can in a measure understand how that suffering which, because it was not rightly borne, has been wholly unprofitable and demoralising in this life may one day be changed in quality and made the condition of a richer, deeper, nobler life in the Beyond.

The Burden of the World's Ill.

Upon many souls the dead-weight burden of the world's sufferings acts as a paralysis to thought and effort. Considerations like those just urged may help such to turn from passive desolation to active energy. In the lives of most highly sensitive natures there are moments when the individual feels as if he were an Atlas bearing up alone the burden of the world's ill. It is not so. In the last resort it is borne up by God, and there are always "seven thousand in Israel," unsuspected and unknown, who are helping us and Him to do it.

Moral Failure and Its Retrieval

In a chapter which is primarily a discussion of pain, it would be out of place to attempt a comprehensive discussion either of the nature of sin or of the meaning of forgiveness. So much pain, how-

ever, is directly the result of sin that it seems necessary, however briefly, at least to indicate some of the main grounds for regarding the forgiveness of sin as a possible and a reasonable idea. And I would ask that what I have written be considered as a contribution merely to this limited department of the problem.

Evil and the Consciousness of It.

Nothing is more remarkable in human nature than the varying degree to which in different individuals the moral consciousness is awake. You will find men and women who are perfectly unconscious that their lives are one long expression of "envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness," who yet feel paroxysms of contrition because they are haunted by impure dreams. You will find others quite easy in their minds about a long course of sexual depravity but burdened with remorse for an unkind word. We do not "see ourselves as others see us," much less as God sees us. Few of us know where our moral weakness really lies. Sin and the consciousness of sin are quite a different matter.

The Moral Significance of Regret.

There is a second no less remarkable fact—one, indeed, which largely explains the former. The guilt of an action is

directly proportionate to the extent to which the doer knows that it is wrong. Its injurious effect, however, upon his moral character is *inversely* proportionate to the extent that he regrets it. This point is so important that it requires expansion. Every act is the expression of a previous tendency or disposition in the character; the doing of the act stimulates that tendency; repeated acts of the same kind rapidly create a habit, which becomes a chain by which we are tied and bound. Not only that; conscience defied becomes less sensitive. An act which on the first occasion was done with shrinking, after constant repetition is performed with equanimity. The "natural" consequence of the commission of wrong is not the awakening but the dulling of the sense of sin. But, if this be so, a conclusion of immense importance follows. To feel constant and growing pain at the contemplation of one's own past guilt is already to have begun to reverse its natural consequences within the self. The consciousness of moral failure—I mean, of course, only when it rises to the height of acute discomfort—is a sign that the old self of whose character the act deplored was a

natural expression is already dead or dying, and a new self coming to the birth. Repentance is itself an evidence of moral advance already actually achieved. Its smart is the smart of "growing pains."

God and the Sinner.

But in order to bring the new self to the birth the individual must firstly gain a clear perception of the nature and meaning of that pain, and secondly, must bring it into relation with the thought of his own value, actual and potential—his actual value being in the last resort what God, in spite of all his failure, thinks of him; his potential value being what God, in spite of all his weakness, can yet make of him. At bottom this is what the traditional Christian doctrine of the forgiveness of sins was really driving at, though obscured by language derived from the Jewish sacrificial system and by an obsolete psychology. Christianity has proved to be a "Gospel" just in proportion as it has stressed the idea (shown in the previous chapter to be Christ's most characteristic contribution to our conception of God) that the creative power of the all-pervading Divine stands there ever "declining to be estranged," that is, still continuing to regard the offender as a being

of priceless value for whom, in spite of all, He feels affection undiminished and hope unlimited.

The Sinner and God.

The dawning consciousness of moral failure and of its true nature is itself, as we have seen, the beginning of a new birth, and contains and implies the possibility of further growth. But whether that possibility will be realised or not depends largely on the extent to which the individual recognises this attitude of the Divine, and thereby gives God, so to speak, the opportunity of fanning into flame the spark of higher aspiration. This is the profound truth underlying the old evangelical exhortation to "lay hold of the salvation freely offered," or to "rest in the finished work"—phrases which unfortunately disguise from our generation the truth which to our fathers they made luminous. Let the repentant soul realise that, in spite of all, he still has an infinite value for God, that there is still a work he can do for man, and that because of and by reason of his repentance he has already begun to establish a personal contact with a Higher Power—then at once the consciousness, and therefore the intensity and effectiveness, of that contact

is indefinitely enhanced. A stimulation of vitality and moral invigoration begins which cannot but lift him right out of that past which already, by the mere fact that he condemns it and deplores, he has partially outgrown.

The Consequences of Forgiveness.

The forgiveness of sins does *not* mean that either a past act itself or its inevitable consequences to other people can be undone. A repentant murderer cannot call his victim to life again; he may be fortunate enough to have an opportunity to make some amends, as, for instance, by providing for the orphaned children; but that does not undo the past. Yet, following upon genuine repentance, a moral re-creation is possible which can reverse the otherwise inevitable consequences upon a man's own life and character, and so make his sum total contribution to mankind beneficent—even if he cannot overtake and make substantial amends to the actual victims he has wronged or rescind the consequences of his folly on his fortunes or his health. More than that, a character so re-created can effect certain things which seem to be outside the range of those who have never fallen and risen again. St Paul's conversion

will serve to illustrate both these points. It could not bring Stephen to life again, but it turned the harsh fanatic energy which had found expression in that act of persecution into the passion which made him "labour more abundantly than they all." In addition it gave him an insight into the human heart, into the nature of the moral struggle and into the meaning of Christ's life and teaching, which made him, next to his Master, that one who has made the deepest mark on the heart and mind of Europe. And, on a lesser scale, we all know men whose power for good seems to be directly conditioned by the fact that they have known evil and overcome it. Plato says that a physician should not be one who has always enjoyed the best health; and one who has himself failed may sometimes be the better physician to the souls of others.

O felix culpa?

Then, is it better to have sinned and been forgiven than never to have sinned at all? In St Paul's time, too, there were some who drew the same conclusion: "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" We may leave the answer where St Paul left it. Logically it may be "Yes"; practically that answer could

be given only by one who has never felt the experience from the inside. Such know that in all moral failure there is real loss. Some good thing which they might have done will, by reason of their failure, remain eternally undone. And yet they know that but for the power and insight which they derived from the fact that they had failed and been restored, some other good thing would have remained undone. It would seem that the task of bringing about the Kingdom of God requires the co-operation of very different types. There is one work for Mary Magdalene, another for Mary the mother of Christ. We cannot question which of the two will stand higher in that Kingdom; but the other may still stand high.

A Current Religious Error.

In current religious teaching there is an idea directly contrary, as it seems to me, to the teaching of Christ about God, and no less contrary to the lessons of modern psychology. I mean the idea that we should continually contemplate and brood upon our sins and work ourselves up into agonies of contrition about them.

Healthy Contrition.

If God is just He will estimate a man's responsibility for his offences, not by the standard of an ideal man, but by the

standard which he individually had reached at the time when he committed them.[1] If he has come to realise that the offence is much worse than he supposed, that is a sign of growth in him; it is therefore a reason for thankfulness. The contrition which is the natural consequence of fairly facing up to his responsibility, the recognition of the fact that he not only "ought to have known better" but that he did know better, is healthy.

Unhealthy Contrition.

It is quite otherwise if he tries to exaggerate his responsibility, and therefore his contrition, beyond what the facts warrant. The tendency to do this is partly the result of conceiving God as an offended potentate who is likely to be propitiated by an apology in proportion as the nature of the offence is exaggerated —the precise conception of God which Christ did His best to unteach—it is partly the reflection of wounded self-respect. The humiliation which a man feels at discovering that he was and is a

[1] Particularly in regard to the burden of remembered offences, committed in early youth, often the best advice one can give is to minimise their seriousness—to make the person see the offence as something which, though in a grown man an enormity, in a boy deserved "a flogging and have done with it."

greater "rotter" than he had dreamed, is the measure of the Pharisee in him. In so far as this is the case, the endeavour artificially to stimulate contrition is really to stimulate spiritual pride. Once a man knows he is a "worm" and cheerfully accepts the fact, he can begin to rise above the worm. So long as he grovels and broods on his "wormanity" he retards the process—for the secret of moral advance is to transform interest in oneself into interest in the Kingdom of God. Christ taught that God freely forgives but that it is the publican who most easily avails himself of the fact. To the worm that knows it is only a worm, God gives wings.

A Warning from Psychology.

But whatever view we take on the religious issue, from the psychological point of view this emphasis on the duty of brooding over the enormity of the past is bound to be disastrous. Indeed, it is largely responsible for the most depressing of all facts in the experience of religious people—the incapacity to overcome habitually recurrent sin. So many spend their time bitterly repenting of, and after a brief interval exactly repeating, the same act. Their failure has a simple psychological explanation. To concen-

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trate attention on the enormity of an offence, and upon the blackness of heart and the weakness of will which can constantly repeat it, is really to submit oneself to a form of auto-suggestion which can only make the repetition of the act inevitable. The advice given by confessors in these cases is often the worst possible. So far from being told to deplore the past and dread its repetition in the future, the penitent should be advised to turn away his attention from the thought of his own weakness and sin, to concentrate on the power and the desire of God to help him, to think no more of past failure but of the possibility of doing useful constructive work in the world. It may take some time to undo the work of long-continued auto-suggestion, and to free the mind completely from the influence of bad advice and wrong conceptions —meanwhile let him cease to bother about this particular weakness.[1] Psychology

[1] Bad habits, physical and mental, whether the result of youthful misconduct, accident, or the lack of good advice, often get beyond the control of the conscious will. If and when this stage is reached, or all but reached, they should be regarded not as sin, but as disease. In which case the patient is only morally to blame if he declines forthwith to take the necessary steps, and if need

confirms the teaching of St Paul—leave behind the Law, with its associations of failure and of fear, throw yourself on the power and love of God as seen in Christ, and sin shall have no more dominion over you.

Christianity and Recent Psychology

The shell-shock hospitals have provided an unprecedented opportunity for the study of the nature and origin of mental disease. Theories and methods evolved by the great specialists before the war have been tested and developed, and new ones have been invented. The result is a great advance in the understanding of the psychology of the human soul.

Some Provisional Results.

As yet there has not been time for the materials collected to be completely digested, and there is still a plentiful disagreement among practitioners of different schools even in regard to points of

be to seek the best medical advice, to cure the disease. The mere suggestion that a bad habit or an obsession should be transferred from the category of sin to that of disease, to be treated quasi-medically, as one would a nasty ulcer, sometimes at once, more often after concentrated reflection on the idea, effects a cure. If not, a doctor or a nerve specialist should be consulted.

fundamental importance. There are, however, certain conclusions as to which there is sufficient agreement among those competent to pronounce an opinion to justify an outsider in accepting them as at least provisionally established—and among these are some which, once recognised as established, cannot be ignored in any treatment of the subject of this chapter.

"The Repressed Complex."

One point in particular is peculiarly relevant. Man has a natural instinct to try to hide away from himself and from others, experiences which have deeply wounded—in particular acute humiliation, undetected moral lapses, occasions of acute terror or long-drawn-out apprehension. Supposing we succeed in half smothering or even completely obliterating the memory of these, so much the worse for us. To suppress all recollection or expression of such incidents is like applying a plaster to a boil. The emotion associated with the original occasion remains as a suppressed poison in the mind. It is always seeking to find expression by investing the circumstances of a man's subsequent life with an atmosphere of unnecessary apprehension, difficulty, or pain, thus burdening the personality in

the present with the shame, the fear and the agony of the past. The result is depression, neurasthenia and, in some cases, physical paralysis, moral breakdown, or loss of reason.

"Reassociation."

If, however, the patient can be induced to remember clearly and to speak about the buried memory—the "repressed complex" as it is technically called—relief at once begins. It is as if the boil were opened and the poisonous matter let out. It becomes possible for the patient, either for himself or with the help of the psychotherapeutist, to begin a process of readjustment or "reassociation," *i.e.* of associating the event in his mind with an emotion of an opposite kind. He can, for instance, see for himself, or be taught by another to see, what was once a legitimate cause of acute terror or anxiety, either as a trifle which he can now look back on with a smile, or as a real disaster, but yet one which he can contemplate with a feeling of thankfulness in that he has somehow won through; or, again, for the depression of a vaguely realised disgrace he can substitute the satisfaction of failure retrieved or of guilt atoned for. Once this is done, especially if the patient can

be made to see a clear relation between the emotion associated with the past shock or act and that which he experiences in connection with some present anxiety, mental health begins rapidly to accrue.[1]

Painful Memories.

This lesson of psychology has a very important bearing on everyday life. Among men who have served in the fighting line, I notice, on the one hand, an instinctive indisposition to talk about the war. On the other, when speaking among intimates, and especially among men who themselves have seen service, there is a constant tendency to recur to it. But in each man's experience there are some things of which he never speaks even to his most intimate friends—things which, when they start up in memory, he strives, sometimes successfully, more often not, to exorcise from consciousness. And what is true of men who have fought in the trenches is true,

[1] In acute cases of nervous breakdown it is sometimes found that hypnotic suggestion is required to complete the necessary "reassociation." But in many cases even of acute neurasthenia, the mere fact that the "repressed complex" has been brought into consciousness, and that the patient can speak about it clearly and fully, enables him to put behind him both the memory and the emotions associated with it, and, as it were, permanently to detach himself from this incident in his past; which, until he

though to a lesser extent, of most men and women. Which of us has not memories from the past which stab and burn, memories of things seen, things suffered, things done, things left undone; memories of loss, disappointment, humiliation, which we try, but try in vain, to bury?

Reserve, Wise and Otherwise.

The habitual reserve that is characteristic of the English and the Scotch, in so far as it means that one does not carry one's "heart upon one's sleeve for daws to peck at" or is unwilling to be for ever wearying one's friends with the recital of minor troubles or petty peccadilloes, is to be commended; in so far as it is the expression of a high courage which disdains to exaggerate or seem to shirk its full share of the burden and the suffering of the race, it is to be admired. But psychology bears out the ancient proverb, "A sorrow shared is a sorrow halved." And though to be always seeking confidants for one's troubles or one's sins inevitably leads either to morbid introspection or to shallowness of character, an *occasional* unburdening of the soul is

clearly remembered and frankly spoke about it to some one else, had in a kind of way lived on and formed part of his present mental outlook.

good for most of us. But it must be an "unloading" of fears, worries, sorrows and disappointments, and not only a confession of sins.

The Troubles of Youth.

Accordingly anyone who is haunted by the memory of some fright, some fault, some snub in early life, which he has never confided to a single person, should do so—not to all the world, but to some judicious friend who will listen sympathetically to the recital of these things. Once they are expressed in words one can for ever detach oneself from that self of long ago which did, thought and felt these painful things. One can view that old self with the eyes of an outsider and join one's confidant in a smile of sympathy for the misfortunes, or of pardon for sins, of the "poor little devil," upon the stepping-stone of whose dead self the present man has risen to higher things. But—and this is the essential lesson of psychology—until the failures of the dead past have been so expressed its putrefying corpse may, though we know it not, be still poisoning the present.

The Troubles of Maturity.

It is harder to find the right person to whom to confide painful incidents of maturer years—the moral failures, the slights

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of which the most humiliating thing is that we feel them as humiliations at all, the moments of panic, the unworthy forebodings and apprehension, the disappointments in love or in ambition, the haunting fear of loss, failure, or detection which hangs above the head like a sword of Damocles; the follies, lapses, agonies of those we love. It is not only more difficult to find the right person to whom to speak of things like these; when found it is more difficult to bring oneself to use him or her at the critical moment. We are so often withheld from speech by the reflection that even when the cupboard door is opened the skeleton will still remain a skeleton. But this reflection is the excuse, partly of our ignorance, partly of our desire to escape the humiliation of confession. The skeleton, it is true, will still remain a skeleton, but once the fresh air is let in it will—*if* our confidant be one who can give wise advice—become a specimen in the museum instead of the festering remains of a dead self.

The Physician of the Soul.

Many would do well to avail themselves "of some discreet and learned minister of God's Word," and were clergy and ministers trained to be "soul doctors" one might

universalise this advice. Unfortunately they are rarely so trained, and what training they do receive is based on an obsolete psychology. Spiritual advice will do more harm than good unless it is based on a clear recognition of the distinction between sin and disease, that is, between what is entirely, and what is not entirely, under the control of the conscious will. But to ascertain, in any given case, the exact degree to which the individual is responsible is a far more difficult and delicate process than most people seem to think. At least an elementary knowledge of pathological psychology is required, and more than an elementary knowledge of human nature. Precisely because his advice is likely to be taken more seriously, an unwise priest, like an ignorant doctor, can do more harm than other men; and whatever else may result from the laying on of hands, it does not in itself convey a knowledge of the human heart. Still, given sympathy, experience and common sense, the pastor, next to the doctor, has unique opportunities of qualifying in that subject. Again, the ordinary man always approaches a minister of religion with the subconscious expecta-

tion that he is a man easily to be "shocked"—especially if the burdened soul be unorthodox in his beliefs. And since it is hard not to live up to what every one expects of one, it may often cost the minister an effort to free himself from this conventional rôle. But let him make that effort; the minister of Christ is called upon to be not the Judge but the Physician of the soul.

The Resource of Prayer.

Happy, however, are those who from childhood have been habituated to cast their burden upon the Lord, to give free, frank, and natural expression in confident and spontaneous prayer to contrition, sorrow, fear, on each occasion, great or small, as it arises, realising God as the unseen Friend—ready to forgive sins, able and anxious to bind up wounds, a tower of defence in danger. Such find their prayer is answered by a courage enhanced and an insight sharpened, which enables them to look trouble and failure in the face, and before the bitterness has time to sink into the soul, to effect for themselves whatever "reassociation" is required.

The Teaching of Christ.

It is an interesting reflection that the teaching of Christ and His apostles has in some respects anticipated, in others

gone beyond, not, of course, the actual discoveries of recent psychology, but their practical lesson for everyday life. Psychology teaches that the first condition of healing is to bring up into the daylight of clear recognition the exact nature and quality of the wound to be healed; the New Testament bids us look suffering in the face, recognise and confess our sins. The next step, says the psychologist, is to reassociate the remembered episode, to re-educate the mind and heart, to change our attitude towards the past; Christ says the same: "Thy sins are forgiven"; "Sorrow shall be turned into joy." Both say, "First face up to the past; then turn your back upon it"; "Believe that power is yours and according to your faith it will be done unto you." So far they seem to say the same thing. But there is this great difference—Christ has behind Him a religion, a reasonably grounded philosophy of life.[1] Hence the reassociation made by Him is more revolutionary and more profound; for He says of the

[1] In practice successful psychotherapists largely accomplish their cures by suggesting ideas of hope, confidence, and consolation, which is in effect providing the patient with at least the practical deduction of a Chris-

wounds of the past, not only that they can be healed, but that out of them and by reason of them can be won an actual enrichment of the present; and He gives as the ground of this confidence the love and the power of God. Indeed, one might almost say that the essence of Christianity is its peculiar "reassociation" of the idea of suffering. In the New Testament, as has been pointed out in a previous chapter,[1] suffering is no longer a problem but a source of light, no longer a thing to be avoided, but a privilege to be claimed; and that because it is something shared by God Himself and the means of His accomplishing the sublimest of all ends.

The Way and the Power

I have tried to show that, whatever our view of the origin and purpose of the suffering and evil in the world, there is a way out—a way which, for the indi-

tian philosophy of life. Owing, however, to the tragic feud between Science and Religion—a feud which, it may be hoped, our generation will see healed—few eminent scientific men are in a position conscientiously to make full use of this source of power.

[1] *Cf.* pp. 29 ff.

vidual, is at once the most perfect adaptation to environment and the line of moral progress. "Granted," some will say, "but 'straight is the gate and narrow is the way.' When the bitterness, the agony, and the desolation is on us, or when it comes back to us in vivid memories of the past, it is not enough to be told there is a way out, we lack the power to tread it."

Religion as Power.

Precisely at this point religion is seen to be vital to everyday life. For, in exact proportion to its truth and our sincerity, *religion is power.* Conceive of God as Christ conceived Him, make a genuine effort to trust Him and to follow Christ, and experience shows that prayer, communion, meditation, will prove to be the road to power. "Salvation"—that is, inspiration and deliverance in one—is within our grasp. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find."

But, if this be said, in the same breath a warning must be added against an unquestioning submission to the guidance, not only of popular manuals of devotion, but even of the great classics. Even in the best of them, language is occasionally used which cannot but suggest the idea that God is a jealous Potentate needing

and liking to be placated by ostentatious grovelling. But to the precise extent in which any surviving elements of this pre-Christian conception affect our attitude towards Him, our prayer is likely to be a source of weakness not of power. A parent or a teacher can do very little for a child who is simply abject, and it is hard for God to speak to us unless we first obey the order, "Son of man, stand upon thy feet."

There is another avenue to spiritual power, less important but, because less familiar, needing special emphasis.

The Subconscious Mind.

Modern psychology has shown that what I can or cannot do depends not only on the desires and the effort of my conscious self, but on the hopes, fears and convictions which have sunk deep into my subconscious mind.[1] If my conscious mind believes in God but I am for ever anxious for the morrow, it is because my subconscious mind does not believe. The

[1] I use the term "subconscious mind" for its obvious convenience to describe that part of the mind which happens to be for the time being outside the field of full consciousness. Anything, however, or practically anything, in the subconscious area of the mind can on occasion come into the field of consciousness, and anything in the conscious mind may be withdrawn from consciousness.

subconscious mind is always learning from the conscious, but it both learns and forgets more slowly. And the lessons it takes to heart most deeply are not the purely intellectual notions of the conscious mind, but the values and emotions associated with them. A man, for instance, may believe with his conscious mind that God is good and men are brothers, but only if he plans and acts towards the Universe and man as if these things were true will his subconscious mind believe it also. If his conscious mind affirms the principle of love but he schemes injury to the brother whom he hath seen, it is the attitude of hate that the subconscious mind will learn.

Its Direction.

It is, therefore, not enough to assent with the mind to a philosophy that proves that the Power behind the Universe is one that works for righteousness; it is not enough to recognise with the intellect that for the individual sufferer there is a way out; we must so realise the meaning and the implications of these beliefs for feeling, thought and conduct, that they become part of our inmost being. But for this to happen, the values and emotions dominant in our conscious mind must dominate the subconscious also. Con-

scious and subconscious act and react on one another; but the conscious, if it knows and wills, can in the long run direct the whole by selecting the ideas and values upon which to ponder deepest in moments of quiet meditation.

"Auto-suggestion."

You may call this "auto-suggestion" if you like; auto-suggestion is only a bad thing if the idea suggested is evil or untrue, and it is often of the utmost value. But in any case a certain amount of it is a psychological necessity. Do what we will, we cannot keep our minds a vacancy. The conscious mind is ever brooding, ever dwelling on thoughts, hopes and fears which inevitably act as "suggestions" to the subconscious. We cannot avoid some form of auto-suggestion; we can *choose* the form. Let us, then, select what our intellect at its keenest sees to be most true, what our insight at its acutest sees to be most beautiful or best, and meditate on this. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, *think on* these things." Above all, as we

compose ourselves to rest at night, let us remember to govern mind and thought. We cannot but "suggest" to ourselves *some* thoughts, the effect of which will follow us next day. We have got to make a choice between thoughts of confidence or despair, of power or weakness, of love or hate. One way or the other, we cannot but decide whether our attitude to life and to the Universe—and that means to God—is one of doubt or trust, and in regard to pain, one of acceptance or resentment. Then let the choice made reflect, not the mood of the moment, but the conviction of a life.

The Beacon Light.

In the perplexities, the anxieties, the smarting pains of life, such self-control, such government and direction of our thoughts is hard. We need some focal point round which to centre our philosophy of power and help; we seek some beacon light upon the cliff—visible however dark the night.

And this we have.

Direction, inspiration, strength can all be had from one source. Only let the needle of life's compass be magnetised and free to move, so that it points always towards the Pole. Steer boldly straight

ahead, "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross"—courage victorious and love triumphant. Let prayer and meditation centre always round the thought of the Love and Power of that infinite and all-pervading Spirit of whom Christ is the portrait, and it will be possible to rise above the natural consequences of evil happenings, to make of suffering an opportunity, of loss a stepping-stone to gain, and to find in failure retrieved and pain conquered the secret of power.

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